



G. C. Beresford

for Capt. Rachevi

# GREEK MEMORIES

Compton Mackenzie

AXIV 455

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TO  
SIR FRANCIS ELLIOT, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.  
IN AFFECTIONATE ADMIRATION

*Greek Memories* is the third volume of Compton Mackenzie's War Memories, of which the two previous volumes already published are *Gallipoli Memories* and *Athenian Memories*. The fourth and final volume, *Ægean Memories*, is in preparation and will be published shortly.

## Preface

IN the preface to my *Athenian Memories* it was announced that two volumes would be required to complete the chronicle of events in Athens during 1916; but, by making *Greek Memories* longer than either of its predecessors and by rationing myself strictly in the way of decorative matter, I have contrived to spare readers a fifth volume. The result of packing so much into the third volume may seem to affect the style with a displeasing baldness; but it suits the atmosphere of that feverish and laborious year of strain.

Soon after the publication of *Athenian Memories* a book called *The Allied Secret Service in Greece* appeared from the pen of Sir Basil Thomson, whose description as Director of Intelligence 1919-1921 (a civil post connected with the Police) suggested a more intimate knowledge of Greek affairs than he possessed.

To contradict Sir Basil Thomson sentence by sentence would have been tedious alike to my readers and myself. I have therefore only bothered to expose the untrustworthiness of his narrative where such an exposure did not interfere too conspicuously with the form of my own. I want to make it clear to those critics who were unable to distinguish between the comparative authenticity of *Athenian Memories* and *The Allied Secret Service in Greece* that Sir Basil Thomson's official position gave him very little more opportunity to know what was happening in Greece during 1915-1917 than the man in the street.

"Experienced Intelligence officers take steps to check the accuracy of the information that reaches them in this way."

## PREFACE

Thus writes Sir Basil Thomson in the preface of his book, and with those words he condemns himself with his own pen more ruthlessly than I could condemn him with mine.

It has been necessary to assume that those who read *Greek Memories* will have read *Athenian Memories*, in which care was taken to set the scene for the present volume.

In *Ægean Memories*, which will bring this work to a conclusion, I believe I can promise the patient reader the most entertaining volume of the series.

July 4th, 1932.

## POSTSCRIPT

That preface was written on July 4th 1932, and first published on October 27th of the same year. To-day, March 27th, 1939, as I take up my pen to add a postscript I read of the death of Sir Basil Thomson. I had intended to write some sharper comments on *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, but I now refrain lest anybody should suppose I would write about the dead what I dared not write about the living. When I was prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act immediately after the publication of *Greek Memories* some people imagined that Sir Basil Thomson had exercised influence toward that end. I had no reason whatever at the time to believe that there was the faintest justification for such a theory, and any breath of doubt was finally dispelled in a letter to me from Lawrence of Arabia which named explicitly the men who did exercise their influence. That letter reposes with several other epistolary contributions to the history of our time and has been left in my will to the College of which Lawrence and I were both members. In this letter Lawrence told me he thought I had spoilt my book by including too many of the details of administrative work, and in the new

## PREFACE

edition of *Greek Memories* I have excised some of what was considered dull and superfluous by a great man better qualified than anybody to pronounce a judgment. In the preface I have spoken of the style being affected by a displeasing baldness, and inevitably that baldness has been emphasized by this process of excision. Without the wearisome details of departmental strife it is impossible to convey the strain of overwork caused by small obscurantist minds, but the tale of bygone stupidities is apt to become stupid itself, and the only excuse for telling it might be the chance of its curative value in future. I lack any belief in the likelihood of such a result. So let the tale be buried in the original edition of this book.

In fairness to the various Authorities whose sagacity decreed my prosecution, I should add that the present edition has *not* been censored, and I beg readers to accept my assurance that they have not been deprived of any secrets, nutritious or otherwise.

In Chapter XI may be read a curious story about peacocks as birds of ill-omen. The superstitious who are impressed by that story will find their superstition confirmed when I tell them that almost exactly sixteen years after the incident therein recorded a peacock once more delivered to me its sinister warning. At the time *Greek Memories* first appeared I was beginning my second year of office as Rector of Glasgow University and on the evening of its publication I was addressing the members of the International Students' Club. When I entered the room where the address was to be given I caught sight of the plumage of a peacock mounted and framed in the Oriental manner. That confounded bird gave me a sense of foreboding throughout a long speech, at the end of which I was told I was wanted on the telephone. There I heard the news that *Greek Memories* had been withdrawn and that a prosecution was imminent. I was due to speak in Trinity College a day or two later and saw no

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reason to postpone the pleasure of a visit to Dublin by waiting conveniently for the Authorities to decide what course they proposed to take. There is nothing like Ireland for restoring a man's belief in the ability of the human mind to overcome the pettiness of officialdom, but even the virtue Ireland imparts was not proof against the nervous exasperation of almost continuous trunk-calls inquiring whether it was true I was to be prosecuted for my latest book. It was useless to answer, to newspaper after newspaper, that I did not know. The ringing was incessant. The bells of hell went ting-a-ling-a-ling, and always for me.

At last, early on a frore November morning, I reached Euston, where a vigilant camera-man secured a photograph in which I was presented to the public as something between a moth-eaten tragedian, a vendor of roast chestnuts, and a Guy Fawkes left over from yesterday. I have never seen guilt more clearly marked in every crease of a man's clothing and countenance, and to this day I feel I ought to consider myself lucky that I was not charged with murder instead of with a breach of the Official Secrets Act, for I should certainly have been eliminated amid the execrations and applause of a grateful public.

When I reached my flat the ringing started again. Had I received the summons yet? A summons was floating around. On that point the Press was definite. Where was that summons? It was my duty to find out. I consulted my then solicitor. He rang up the Old Jewry. The summons had been sent to the Chief Constable in Inverness, who was waiting for me to return to the North. I saw no reason why I should travel all the way up to Inverness merely to gratify local patriotism, and said so; nobody should be expected to chase a summons as a carefree boy chases a butterfly. My solicitor spoke sharply to the Old Jewry. The evasiveness of this summons was causing his client considerable annoyance. The Old Jewry promised to rescue the summons from the Chief Constable in Inverness. It might be

## PREFACE

expected back in London by Thursday morning. "Very well, then," said my solicitor, "I will make an appointment for the summons to be served on Mr. Mackenzie the same afternoon at half-past two in my house."

Punctually to the moment an Old Jewry Inspector arrived with that vagrant piece of paper. Inspector P. had as charming a personality as I have ever encountered. He said (and he meant it) that an occasion like this made him regret he had abandoned his original profession for the Law. I asked him what that profession was.

"Publishing. I started life as a packer at Macmillan's. Still, I've had many interesting gentlemen through my hands."

And he gave me a list of them, which brief though it was included some of the most distinguished embezzlers of our period. For a moment I beheld a waxen effigy at Madame Tussaud's, but the vainglorious fancy fled. I knew I was not cut out for a classic figure of crime.

Throughout the case Inspector P. was a solace and a joy to me. And here let me pay a tribute of gratitude to all the police. There was not one of them who did not murmur, "Good luck, sir!" through whatever guarded door I was passing, even when it was the door of the Old Bailey dock itself. After the first hearing in the Guildhall, Inspector P. of the Old Jewry introduced me to Inspector Q. of the Metropolitan Police, and I was invited to go down King Street with them and have one. In a dim little bar they drank my health and fortune in blushful gins with a solemnity of goodwill the memory of which I shall cherish always.

It is obviously impossible to give a full account of the preliminary hearings *in camera* at the Guildhall before Alderman Sir George Truscott, or of the trial *in camera* at the Old Bailey before Mr. Justice Hawke, and it would be a waste of printer's ink to relate the rest of the proceedings. The device of *in*



## P R E F A C E

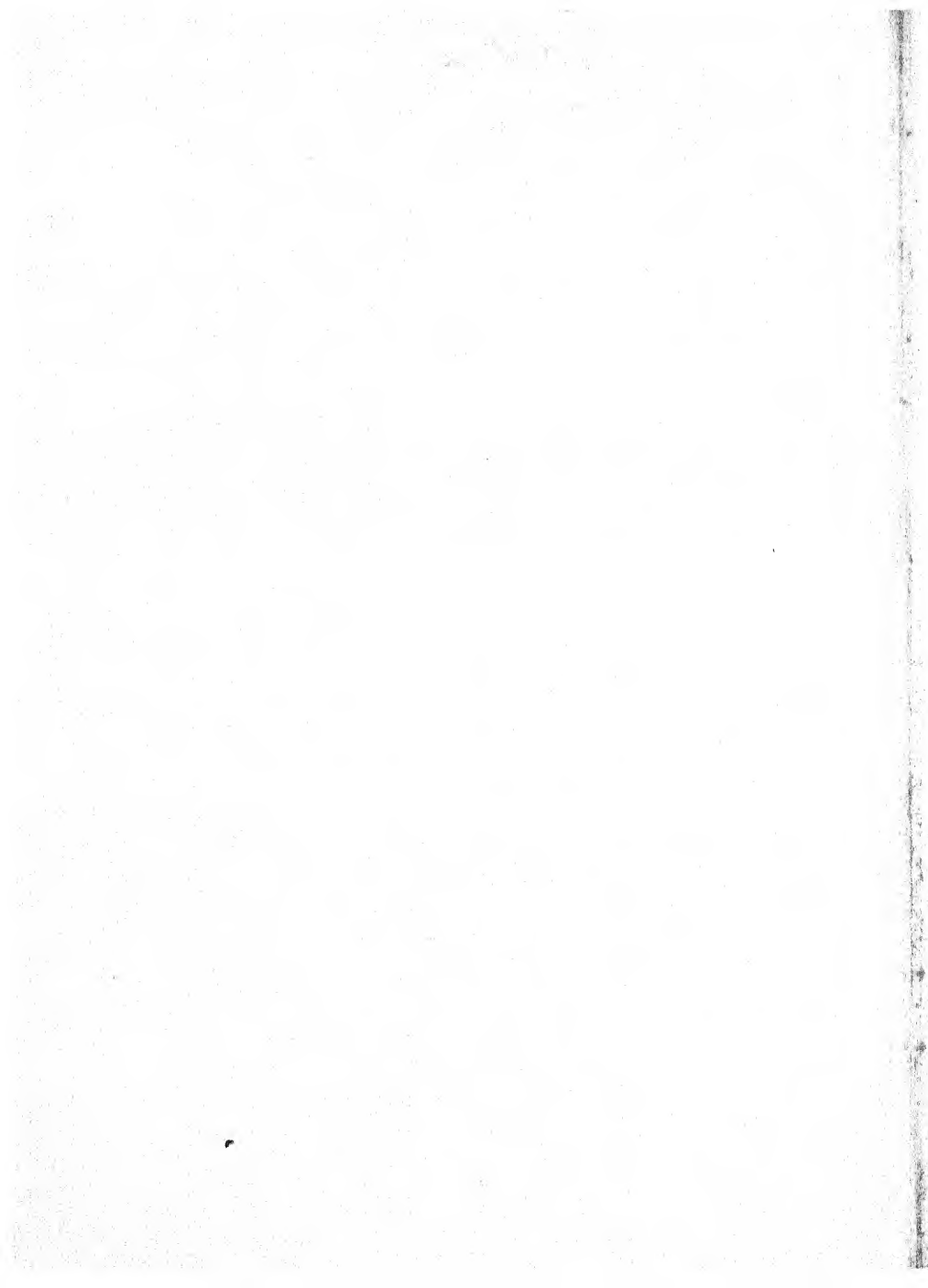
*camera* makes it impossible for an accused man to defend himself without grave prejudice to his reputation. I was naturally anxious to plead not guilty at the Old Bailey, but it was pointed out to me that however much money were spent in prolonging the case by calling witnesses from Constantinople and Athens, and however much time were spent in having fun with the Prosecution, the learned Judge could only direct the jury at the end of the case to find a verdict of guilty, because it was an offence against the Act to quote from any document which had come to my knowledge in the course of employment during the War. That being so, it would be extremely unwise to prolong the case, because if the learned Judge should decree that the time of the Court had been wasted he might feel it incumbent upon him to impose a much higher fine than I might otherwise expect, might possibly even send me to prison. Should that happen, the inevitable reaction of the public would be that I must have committed a very grave offence and I should have no power to communicate to the public what the facts were, because those facts would have transpired *in camera*. So I accepted this advice and pleaded guilty. What between one thing and another, the case had already cost me in hard cash £2,533, and in wasted time another £2,250, and I knew I could not afford to spend perhaps nine months in Wormwood Scrubbs, interesting though the experience would have been. On top of £4,783 the Judge's fine of £100 and £100 costs seemed light, but I was told beforehand that I must be prepared to find £500 against eventualities. By now I had not a spare penny, and only because the *Daily Mail*, for which I was then working, generously sent down £500 in cash to the Old Bailey to secure my being able to pay the fine imposed was I able to feel secure against a night in Brixton at the end of a tiring day. I had to sell nearly all the manuscripts of my books, and a few treasures from my library as well.

All these might have been worth losing if I could have looked

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forward to a public fight; but prosecution under the Official Secrets Act is in effect a Star Chamber business, and the danger of this Act to liberty if it ever were administered by an unscrupulous Government is clear. At this moment we are making a parade of our freedom, and certainly for the moment we have at any rate an illusion of more freedom than the victims of authoritarianism. Nevertheless, the tendency of our democratic rulers moves steadily towards repression, and the Official Secrets Act is a convenient weapon for tyranny. Two members of the Labour shadow Cabinet in 1932 were approached with a view to asking a question in the House of Commons about my case, but their reply was that they might want to use the Official Secrets Act themselves when they were next in power. They, the avowed guardians of liberty, knew too well the value of that threat to liberty. Even Cabinet Ministers are protected by this Act, and there is no clearer sign of the decay of statesmanship in this country than this eagerness of second-rate politicians to preserve the secrets of their own place-hunting and time-serving.

The ease with which public servants protected by the Official Secrets Act can now hide the proofs of their incompetence is completely destructive of true democracy, and until bills of impeachment have become once more a feature of our political life true democracy will not revive.



## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS

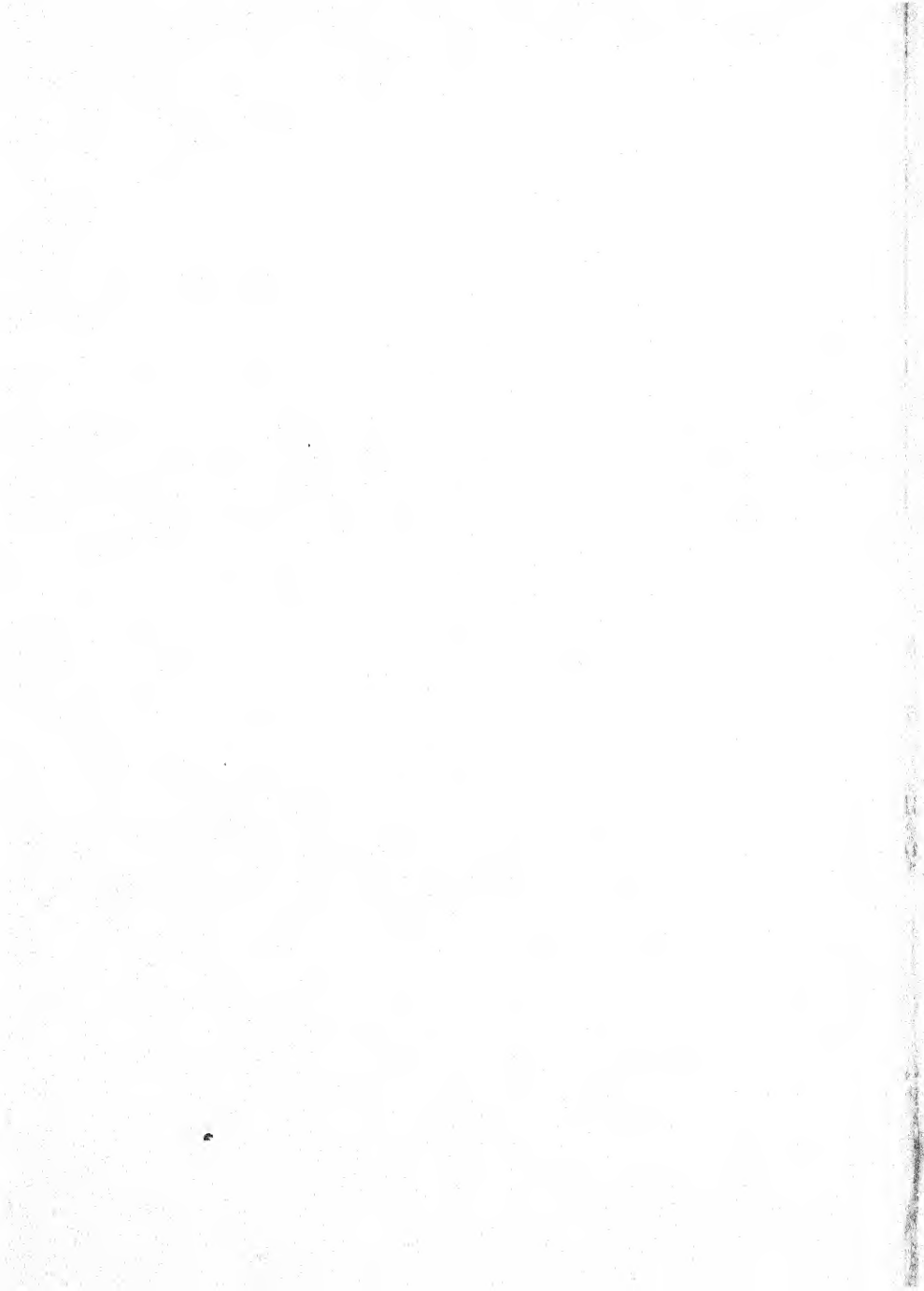
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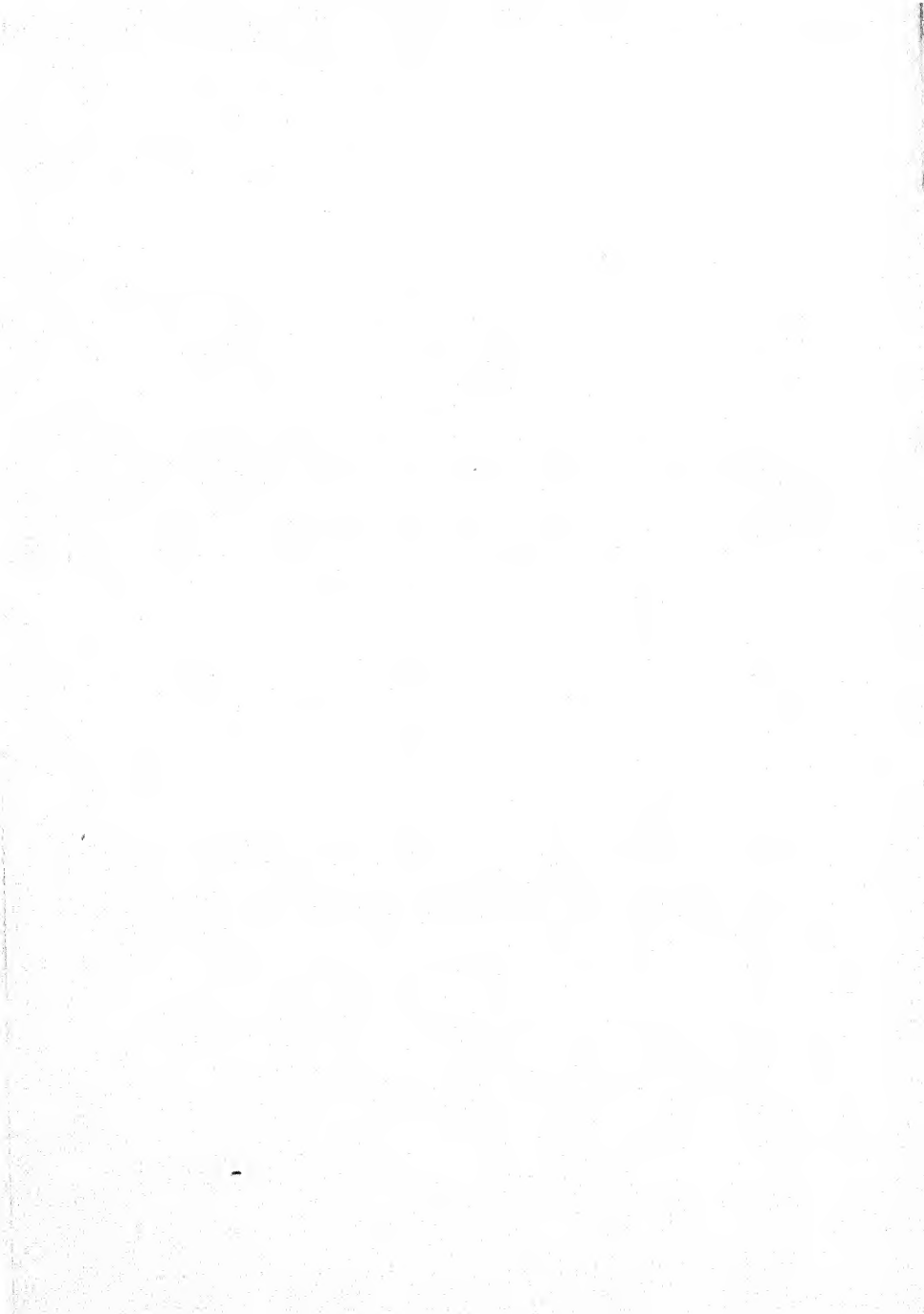
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## PREAMBLE

FOR the benefit of those who did not read *Athenian Memories* or who have long since forgotten what took place in that previous volume of these Memoirs, I think it will save a deal of confusion if I recapitulate briefly the situation in Athens at the time of the opening of this book.

At the beginning of 1916 Greece was divided internally by two factions whose mutual distrust and enmity were almost daily growing more intense, and threatening at any moment to develop into a major domestic crisis.

On the one hand were the Royalists, the adherents of King Constantine, who included a large section of the Army and such Right Wing politicians as Gounaris and Nicolas Theotokis, the Greek Minister to Berlin. In the opposite camp were the supporters of Mr. Venizelos, the Liberal ex-Premier, who despite having a substantial majority in the Country had refused to contest the Elections of the previous December, as a protest against the unjustifiable dissolution of the Chamber in June.

King Constantine's belief in the certainty of a German victory and Mr. Venizelos's even more profound faith in the triumph of the Allies were no doubt the original stumbling-block to any concerted Greek policy at the beginning of the War; but later, when a German victory seemed less certain and the King himself had begun to have serious doubts of it, his personal antipathy for Mr. Venizelos, in whose policy he saw not only a danger to Greece but a direct threat to the Throne, committed him to the continuance of his uncompromising attitude and led eventually to the Revolution of 1916.

## P R E A M B L E

It was the unenviable task of Sir Francis Elliot, the British Minister in Athens throughout this period, to hold the scales between the King and Mr. Venizelos in an attempt to secure Greek intervention on the side of the Allies. In this endeavour he had to act in concert with M. Guillemin, Prince Demidoff, and Count Bosdari—the French, Russian, and Italian Ministers—each of whom had different instructions, based on individual national aspirations, from their respective Governments.

Greece herself was at this time in a state of armed neutrality, the Army having been mobilized in September at the time of Bulgaria's entry into the War. Her neutrality, however, was still technically inviolate and the presence of British and French troops at Salonica was causing considerable difficulties. For though the promise of these troops had been asked for by Mr. Venizelos in the event of Bulgaria's attacking Serbia, and thus forcing Greece to come to its ally's aid, their premature arrival in Salonica was clearly a breach of Greece's neutrality, and there were grave suspicions that they were to be used, not to support Serbia, but to threaten Greece into buying off Bulgaria with Greek territory.

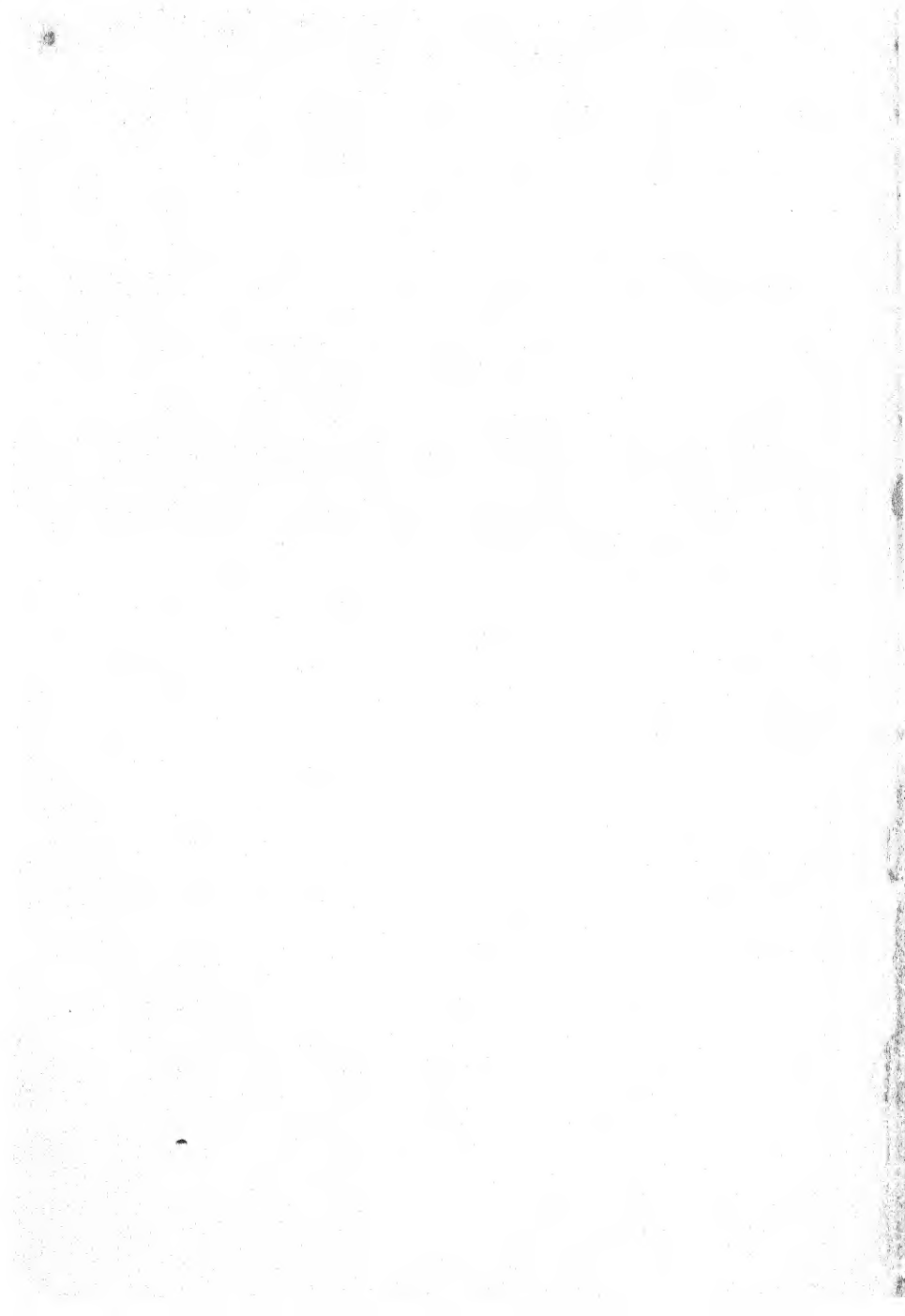
My own position in Athens was as a member of the sub-branch of the V Bureau in Alexandria, the Special Intelligence Bureau for the Eastern Mediterranean, to whose Chief, Major V, I was directly responsible. He in turn was responsible to C in London. Our organization in Athens was divided as usual into two parts: the A Branch, for collecting information about the enemy, and the B Branch, for dealing with enemy agents or "counter-espionage." I was in charge of this Department, which owing to the letter Z (by which I was referred to officially) came to be known as the Z Bureau. For assistance I had F. W. Hasluck, in charge of our card index of suspected persons; Tsitsopoulos, our translator and doctor; the invaluable Tucker and a cosmopolitan team of agents, including Davy Jones—the

## P R E A M B L E

porter at the German Legation. To assist us in our work we had the Sunbeam car acquired from Erskine, the Counsellor at our Legation, and driven by Corporal Robertson of the A.S.C. He and Markham, our other chauffeur, were to drive their cars under fire before the year was out. We also had the use of the auxiliary cutter *Valkyrie* under Lieut. Rogers, R.N.R., and the voluntary services of Lieut. Moon, R.N., to help our clerical work in his spare time.

The centre against which our counter-espionage work was mainly directed was of course the German Legation at Athens, where Major von Falkenhausen the Military Attaché, and Baron de Grancy the Naval Attaché, worked. In addition, the propagandist efforts of Baron Schenck occupied a good deal of our attention. In combating their activities I worked in close collaboration with the new French Intelligence Bureau under the Naval Attaché Capitaine de Roquefeuil, with M. Ricaud as my opposite number in charge of B work. Our own Naval Attaché at the time was Commander W. F. Sells, R.N.

But enough of names. The reader will find his own way among the labyrinth of policies and personalities which reveals itself in the following pages. This preamble is merely to set the scene, and to introduce some of the actors.



## CHAPTER I: JANUARY

### DEPARTMENTAL HOSTILITIES OPEN

TOWARD the end of *Athenian Memories* I mentioned that Sir Francis Elliot instructed me to write a report on the Intelligence Organization, the existence of which had now been officially notified to the Greek Government under the somewhat clumsy title of 'The Bureau of Information attached to the British Legation in Athens.' Here is an extract from that report, which lies before me as I write copied out in Moon's\* round and luminous hand at a time when such clerical help was one of the major works of mercy:

To  
SIR FRANCIS ELLIOT, G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G., &c.,  
H.B.M.'s MINISTER,  
BRITISH LEGATION,  
ATHENS.

Jan. 11th, 1916.

Sir:

I have the honour to submit the following report of the organization at present known as the 'Bureau of Information attached to the British Legation in Athens,' an organization which now for the first time in the history of its development seems likely to achieve the effectiveness of a self-contained structure.

I shall divide my report into three parts:—

- A. Early history of the Organization.
- B. Present constitution of the Organization.
- C. Suggestions for the future development of the Organization.

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 270, etc.

Turning to C, suggestions for the future development of the Organization, the report reads :

The importance of Athens as a centre of intrigue has increased and increases now still more every day, as the reasons set down in order below clearly indicate:

- (1) The arrival of enemy submarines in Near Eastern waters.
- (2) The need for control of Greek trade to combat the supply of submarines, and contraband in favour of the enemy.
- (3) The growth of importance of the expedition against the Dardanelles.
- (4) The need to control enemy agents likely to be found in Imbros, Tenedos, and Lemnos.
- (5) The entry of Bulgaria into the War.
- (6) The Austro-German attack on Serbia.
- (7) The occupation and defence of Salonica by the Allies.
- (8) The arrest of enemy consuls and agents at Salonica.
- (9) The arrest of the same in Mytilene consequent upon the arrival of French troops there.
- (10) The Italian entry into Albania.
- (11) The Serbian refugees being sent to Corfu together with French troops.
- (12) The menace of a Turko-Germanic invasion of Egypt.
- (13) The necessary restriction of passports for Egypt.

In view of the increase apparent on every side of the field of our activities, this does seem the moment to consider seriously the whole constitution of what is now somewhat vaguely and clumsily known as the Bureau of Information attached to the British Legation in Athens. The opportunity is still further enhanced by the fact that the French authorities have just decided to initiate what will undoubtedly prove a highly efficient organization. Their proposal roughly is to open at the French School at Athens a Bureau de Renseignements, to erect a Wireless apparatus there in communication with the principal installation at Milos, and so equally with Salonica, Syra, Crete, Mytilene, etc., and to insist on a French destroyer's being at their service in the Gulf of Athens. In conversation with

## JANUARY

Commander Sells the French Naval Attaché suggested the possibility of our acting with them in a joint Bureau with headquarters at the French School.

However, as I write this we have already had to enlarge, and to take premises next to the British Legation. Naturally the Russian and Italian authorities would also be invited, so as to institute a real Athens Intelligence in relation with the four Legations. At the same time by the nature of our immediate interest it is obvious it would be the French and British authorities who would really control the organization.

If we accept the invitation of the French, it would affect the Z Bureau more than the Commercial Department, which would presumably remain officially at the Legation.

At the same time I submit the advisability of installing in the French School the Contraband Intelligence, which is now under the direction of Lieut. Hill. Lieut. Hill should at once change his office from the Legation to the Bureau of Information next door to the Legation.

I understand that the French Naval Attaché will work at the French School, but whether Commander Sells will think it advisable to remove there as well is a matter for discussion. For the present, any arrangements we might make for the whereabouts of our respective offices are less important than the more drastic changes and developments I shall suggest for outside Athens. As far as the Z Bureau and the Contraband Intelligence are concerned, I have the honour to submit the following proposals:

- (1) Control of Intelligence in Mytilene, Samos, Chios, Rhodes, Syra, Crete, Corfu, and in fact all the islands where agents are considered necessary.

### REMARKS:

In view of the French action at Corfu, and of their possible action with regard to other islands, it seems to me essential that all Intelligence should be centralized in Athens. We were able on Jan. 11th, 1916, to send the French Bureau a list of 50 residents at Corfu hostile to our interests, which will be of the greatest service in



enabling a speedy clearance. Most of the people arrested in Mytilene were recorded through our efforts, and there is no doubt that the future freedom of Salonica must rest ultimately with us.

- (2) A much closer co-operation with Salonica, Alexandria, and Tenedos by means of liaison agents appointed by the Athens Intelligence.

REMARKS:

The want of regular liaison agents militates seriously against our effective co-operation with Salonica, Alexandria, and Mudros. On Jan. 10th I was informed casually by Mr. Rawlins, our Consul in Crete, that the British Military Authorities in Salonica had authorized some Cretans to hold up the German mail car travelling between Larissa and Sorovitch. As I write this (Jan. 11th) I have not heard the result of this enterprise, but the value of it may be seriously depreciated by not consulting with us in advance. I am constantly in touch with the movements of the German mail, and we could have assured the success of the coup by indicating the passengers and the probable importance of their errand. Another instance of a self-stultifying initiative happened a few days ago, when a man turned up in Athens with a pass signed by a naval officer authorizing his journey. This man informed a member of the Russian Service that he had been told to send a code wire informing this officer of the departure of the Greek destroyer with the German doctors. Such missions with a semi-official authorization are much to be discouraged. All that could be known of the movements of Greek destroyers was known to us, and had the authorities warned us, we could have wired, and this with much less risk of discovery and much more likelihood of accuracy. Finally, in this connexion I should like to point out that, although the arrest of the Consuls in Salonica took place a fortnight ago, we are still ignorant in Athens of the results, which yet in part have been published in

## JANUARY

*L'Opinion de Salonique.* Bearing in mind the publication by the Germans of the letters that were thrown into the sea by Captain Wilson,\* I cannot help regretting that we were not given the earliest possible opportunity in Athens to make a counter stroke with the publication of the consular correspondence.

- (3) Appointment of agents by sharing with the French at Larissa, Sorovitch, Volo, Patras, Calamata, Corinth, Previsa, and other centres of German propaganda.
- (4) Appointment of agents to travel on the Greek boats.
- (5) Submission of *all* passports to us before visas are issued by the Consulate.
- (6) Complete separation from any organization that has military information as its main object.
- (7) Development of the Secret Service in closest co-operation with the French.

### REMARKS:

The encouraging results which we are getting from co-operation with the French Service show how such a further development would help us. I only await authorization of funds to effect this. It is worth while pointing out here that what is conventionally known as our Secret Service is really about as secret as a plain-clothes detective, and since M. Skouloudis † suggested the advisability of giving our agents cards to avoid annoyance by the police, they may be said to be too sacrosanct to be any longer useful. I propose therefore to use the original agents in future outside Athens, more particularly as travellers on steamships.

- (8) A properly equipped central office.

### REMARKS:

I have now the office but not the equipment. The amount of time wasted by myself, Mr. Tucker, and others in mechanical clerical work and the growing complexity of accounts, which require critical attention,

\* Captain Stanley Wilson, M.P. *Athenian Memories*, p. 335, etc.

† The Greek Prime Minister.

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are seriously impeding our activities. I very earnestly invite the attention of the authorities to this request.

- (9) The training and development of agents that will be useful if our troops ever advance in any field of operations in the Near East.

### REMARKS:

An invincible optimism leads me to urge the desirability of this step, superfluous though it may seem to many.

- (10) The establishment of a Press Bureau that will deal with the local Press.

### REMARKS:

I am particularly anxious to check the local activities of the hostile propaganda, and being able to call upon the services of Mr. Dawkins, the late Director of the British School at Athens, I hope that this step will be authorized. It is perhaps not generally appreciated how much the Greeks depend on their Press and that every little town has its two papers. This would not compete or interfere with Mr. Talbot's work.

- (11) The issue of a Black List for Athens in connexion with the Naval Black List of Port Said and the Cairo Black List.

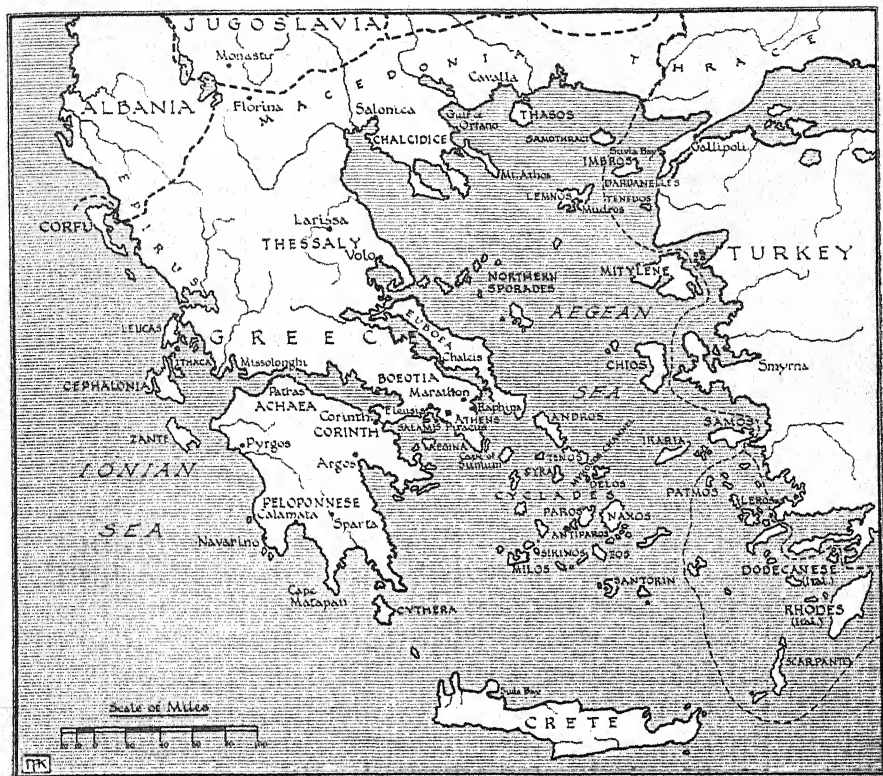
### REMARKS:

I strongly urge that Athens be made the centre from which the complete list be issued. The combination of the existing G.H.Q. List (almost entirely fed from Athens) with the Contraband List not yet sent round and the French List now being compiled will present a very complete history of hostile activities. If we may be kept well informed by Salonica and receive promptly the Cairo and Port Said Lists, we can incorporate and co-ordinate the minor information.

- (12) Increase of funds available for our purpose.

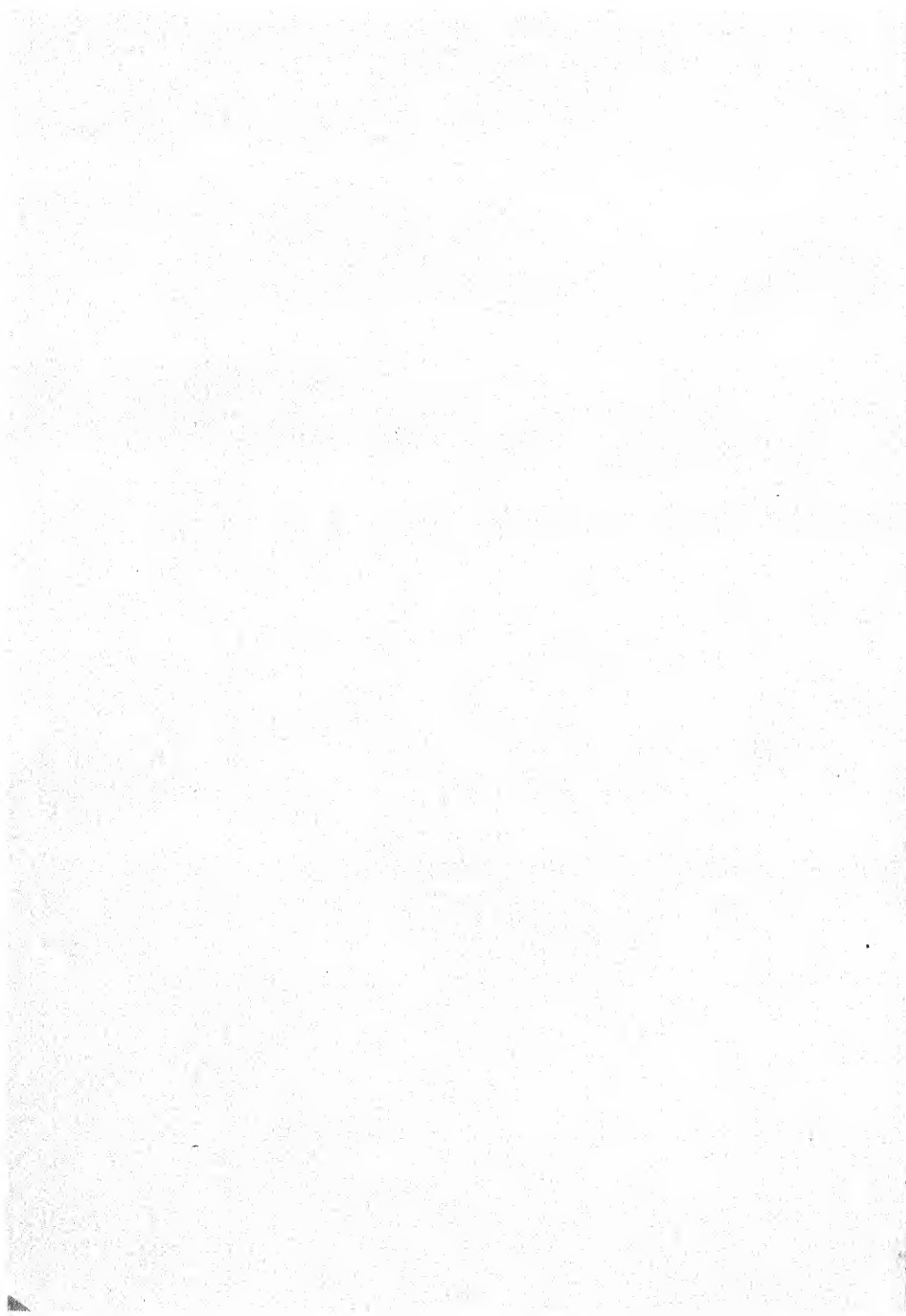
### REMARKS:

I ask now for an allowance of at least £2,000 a month exclusive of anything which is allowed for Contraband



*Prepared by the Royal Institute of International Affairs*

Map of Greece and the neighbouring islands



Intelligence. The expenses of the Bureau of Information during January will certainly be well over £750, and if our activities are to have freedom of development, another £1,250 is the least that I can ask. I mentioned this estimate to the French Naval Attaché who told me he thought I had well under-estimated my expenses and offered to find extra money if necessary. I venture to think, Sir, that we should be prepared to spend as much as our Allies and should not be placed at a disadvantage by having to fall back upon their charity.

While I was writing that report the press of applicants in the hall of the Legation for visas to Egypt became intolerable and, an opportunity presenting itself to acquire the greater part of the house next door at a rent as I remember of 1,000 drachmas (£40) a month, Sir Francis Elliot authorized me to take 6 Dragatzani Street, which had formerly been a French school. It was a large and dignified affair, too large indeed and too dignified for a sub-branch of that V Bureau in Alexandria which was presently to be known as the Eastern Mediterranean Special Intelligence Bureau, and which I shall henceforth call the E.M.S.I.B. Nevertheless, it would have been foolish to let slip the chance of acquiring premises so absolutely ideal for our purpose, next door as they were to the Legation and at the same time standing back from the street in a large courtyard entered through carriage gates. The front door at the top of a flight of marble steps faced the blank wall of the house beyond. Tucked away in a corner at the far end of the courtyard where it turned into a garden was a delightful little six-roomed cottage in which I planned to live myself, though the rapid expansion of our Bureau combined with temperamental drains and myriads of mosquitoes interfered with this project later on. The courtyard at the back was separated by an eight-foot wall from the garden of the Legation which itself was bounded at the back by a high wall and the

Legation stables no longer in use. The other two sides of the courtyard were overlooked by the back windows of tall houses. Sir Francis asked the Foreign Office for a grant of 200 drachmas a month toward the rent of the new premises on the ground that the Passport Bureau was definitely a part of the Legation. I had hoped to house the Contraband Intelligence as well, but the Commercial Department firmly entrenched in the Legation itself refused to let it budge.

With the Commercial Department of the Legation on one side and Headquarters in Alexandria on the other both resisting any development of counter-espionage work in Athens, I was driven to accept the offer of help from the French organization, and although by now they had their own self-contained organization in the French Archæological School, Captain de Roquefeuil, the French Naval Attaché, at once agreed to contribute 150 drachmas a month toward our rent in order to maintain a French Bureau de Liaison between the two Services.

Here is a brief account I wrote of the French organization in Athens at this time:

The Headquarters of the new French organization in Athens are at the French Archæological School at the top of Odos Zina. Here are installed the two Military Attachés, who are in continuous rapport with the French Military Intelligence at Salonica. Neither of them has anything to do with the main activities of the French Service. This, so far as it affects submarine information and contraband, is directed by the two Naval Attachés, de Roquefeuil and de Béarn. Under them is another French Naval Officer who works at the Piræus with a set of agents. Working in collaboration with them, but independently, is Monsieur Ricaud, the French Z, who runs secondary contraband surveillance on the same lines as Z's counter-espionage and Secret Service. This, in his case, includes the whole of the Islands and Salonica. He works in complete collaboration with us and has offered to share the expenses of

any coup we try to bring off. As an instance of this may be mentioned his offer to pay half of the 3,000 francs which the Harbourmaster of Salonica asks for a document which is said to incriminate Mr. Gounaris in benzine smuggling.

The French School has been made extra-territorial, and a Wireless installation is shortly to be erected there, which will connect with the whole of the Islands and Salonica and of which he offers us free use. They are also equipping an elaborate photographic studio (enlargements, copying, colour photography, etc.), a chemical laboratory, etc.

M. Ricaud suggested to Z that they should make a joint report of the German organization here to be forwarded to London and Paris simultaneously.

So with 350 drachmas a month from the Foreign Office and the French I felt we could commit ourselves to the responsibility of finding the remaining 650. For this rent I obtained large offices for myself and the clerical staff which I had been promised, though it took many weeks to materialize, waiting-rooms for passport applicants, offices for the clerical side of the passport arrangements, an office for the Vice-Consul, and on the top floor space for various inquiry agents on duty.

All this sounds very easy of accomplishment twenty-three years later; but it was carried through that January in an exasperation of cross-purposes which might fitly stand as typical of that mad and muddled year. To begin with, the money to carry on the show during January had not arrived by the tenth of the month, and if Sir Francis Elliot had not advanced 2,000 drachmas from the Legation funds I could not have paid my agents their out-of-pocket expenses. On top of that we received all sorts of contradictory instructions as to where we should send our telegrams and how we should send our mail bags, the only unvarying rule being that in no circumstances were we in Athens to dare to communicate with any other branch of our own organization, or with any other Intelligence Bureau in the



Mediterranean, or with any Naval or Military Commands except through Alexandria. To exacerbate still further our sense of impotency we, in the B or counter-espionage branch, were not allowed a cipher of our own, but had to send all our telegrams to be encoded by the A or espionage branch in the Legation cellar. So long as G.H.Q. remained at Imbros there had never been the least difficulty with the Military authorities; but when Gallipoli was evacuated and most of the old Staff went to Cairo, I was forbidden to communicate directly with them as heretofore, and lost at the same time my subsidy of £150 a month. Army Headquarters at Salonica resented the B branch of the E.M.S.I.B. almost as much as Army Headquarters itself resented not being General Headquarters. With the fight that went on to free A.H.Q. Salonica from the alleged tyranny of G.H.Q. Cairo, my pen is not concerned; but we suffered in Athens indirectly from that strife, and by the middle of January I was having to complain not merely of wandering agents being sent on missions to Athens from Salonica by Army Intelligence without reference either to me or my colleagues in the E.M.S.I.B. at Salonica, but also of improvised Naval operations like the attempt to capture the German doctors summoned to Athens to attend the King.

Before turning aside to look at what was going on in Athens besides departmental squabbles it will be as well to finish the story of that report. When it was written, the Minister decided to send it to the Foreign Office by Sells,\* who was to get a few days' leave out of the mission. We now heard that V himself was going home from Alexandria to arrange about the future of the organization, and it seemed an opportune moment to put in a report. I asked Sells who was the mysterious C that was apparently responsible for the arrangements of all the Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean outside Military and Naval com-

\* The Naval Attaché, Commander now Rear-Admiral W. F. Sells, C.M.G., R.N.

mands; but I found that Sells had no more idea than I had.

"My old man," he told me, "is Blinker Hall." \*

"What's he do?"

"He's the D.I.D."

"What's that?"

"Director of the Intelligence Division, my dear ass," replied Sells, a little shaken by my ignorance of such an important Naval personage. "I think the best thing I can do is to get Sir Francis to let me hand the report straight to him."

Thus lightly was made the fatal suggestion that was to impede our work for nine months, at the end of which time I was to meet C in person and find him henceforth a supporter and a friend, too late, however, to undo the harm which was done by unwittingly putting into the hands of his superior officer a report which C considered reflected on himself.

Sells had hardly left for London when the following telegram arrived from Alexandria on January 21st:

*Kindly take note that according to arrangement made with London and G.H.Q., this organization is responsible for all counter-espionage work in the Near East except in Egypt itself. Continue to give the Legation all information likely to be useful and send us weekly reports of your work. You should send all your communications for G.H.Q. through us. Please forward your December accounts as soon as possible.*

Sir Francis Elliot at once telegraphed to Sir Arthur Nicolson, † the Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to this effect: ‡

\* Admiral Sir Reginald Hall, K.C.M.G., C.B., R.N.

† The late Lord Carnock.

‡ Throughout the book all telegrams are to be read as the equivalent of what was actually written and not as the actual words sent.

*I earnestly hope that Mackenzie's scheme for the reconstruction of Intelligence work in Athens which Commander Sells has taken to London will be carried through as quickly as possible. The work here owing to continuous warnings and requests from Egypt is becoming unmanageable for the present organization, and I have been compelled to authorize the renting of new premises next to the Legation which will house Contraband and Naval Intelligence, the Z Bureau, the Refugee Commission, and the Office for Passport visas. Mackenzie urgently requires a stenographer and typist, and two confidential clerks who can type. Salonica Intelligence is so slow and scarce that I must strongly support the suggestion that all counter-espionage there outside the scope of Intelligence at Army Headquarters should be directed from Athens. I consider it essential that Athens Intelligence which includes important information about the political situation should not be included in V's organization at Alexandria. The present position is that all Intelligence telegrams are sent to Alexandria and thence dispatched to various destinations. This causes great expense, confusion, and delay. I hope to hear from you immediately.*

Two days later from the Legation cellar came the following corpse-reviver from C:

*Forward copy of your memorandum to your Commanding Officer Colonel V immediately. You should have done this in the first instance as no decision when the question is raised can be taken until he has reported on the matter. I regard your behaviour in sending a report over the head of your superior officer and over my head to my superior officer as a gross breach of discipline, and if it occurs again you will be immediately recalled.*

Simultaneously with this Sir Arthur Nicolson telegraphed privately to Sir Francis Elliot:

*Authorities here think that however clever Mackenzie may be he has neither the knowledge nor the experience to direct the whole of the Intelligence of the Near East.*

Fortunately the boat for Alexandria had not left. I might mention in parenthesis that these boats for Alexandria left at irregular intervals of about three weeks from the Piræus so that one had to allow for the possibility of at least two months elapsing before one could get an answer from Alexandria, except of course by telegram at the rate of well over a shilling a word. This is what I wrote to V in Alexandria:

*Athens, January 26th, 1916.*

*C's telegram which arrived this morning seems to indicate a tangled situation in London, and I hasten to explain that :*

- (a) I wrote the report at the Minister's orders.*
- (b) I imagined you were still in London at the time I wrote it.*
- (c) I had no idea at the time of writing that Sells would take it to London, but supposed the Minister himself would forward it direct to the Permanent Under-Secretary.*

*Of course the moment I received C's telegram I asked what I ought to do. Sir Francis replied that he would telegraph himself to C, and he added that he was the person to send the memorandum to you, which I believe he is going to do. I fancy that he is a little bit annoyed about the business, because having given formal notice to the Greek Government of the existence of a Bureau of Information attached to the British Legation in Athens, he feels that he is bound to have a considerable say in its organization. He pointed out to me, rather sharply, I thought, that you had placed me at his disposal and that on those conditions he had taken the unusual step of making the official announcement. The French Minister has pursued the same course as regards the new French organization.*

*The question of my writing a report first arose from the money*

for the January accounts being over a week late in arriving. The Minister advanced me two thousand francs, and asked me what arrangements had been made to ensure my always having money in hand. Following upon that came a wire from Mytilene asking if there was any counter-espionage organization in Athens, and if so where it was to be found. The Minister wired back, 'Certainly, Z, c/o Legation', and the question then arose of Intelligence in the Islands. On top of that came the extraordinary behaviour of A.H.Q. Salonica in not advising the Legation of the details of the raid on the Consulates. . . . The Minister said he could not understand how exactly the organization defined itself and told me to write him a report on the subject. Wires from Cairo and Malta were continually coming in about subjects which I was called upon to deal with and which the Legation was called upon to wire about. Finally, there was the relation between the Commercial Department's Contraband Intelligence and our Counter Espionage, which has as far as I know never been precisely defined.

The Minister, by the way, strongly objects to his Bureau of Information being called Counter Espionage, and I understand that he would prefer to have that title merged in one more inclusive.

It seems to me that unless we come into line with the French at once we shall sink to the level of a secondary organization indeed. It is unfortunate that they should have arrived here just after you left, because I am quite sure that all of what I have urged in my memorandum you would have urged yourself. The new French organization, by the way, has nothing whatever to do with military information, which is run by their Military Attaché.

This morning, as I wired you, Mr. Spyrides\* was arrested. Three police officers and twenty gendarmes entered his shop without a warrant and took all his papers and carried him off to the Police-station. He was told that the Commander of the Cozani Army

\* An important official of the Anatolian Society to which every refugee belonged.

*Corps had wired to have him sent there to be examined in connexion with the charges that were preferred against him of having assisted in the British propaganda. I at once went to the Minister and explained that the arrest of Spyrides was a first attempt by the Court party to arrest illegally various prominent Venizelists. The Minister asked me if he tried to get any military information for us, and I was able to assure him that since the operations in Gallipoli he had not done anything in this line. The Minister then went to Mr. Politis,\* who said he had probably been trying to steal documents of military value, but on receiving Sir Francis's assurances that this was not the case he agreed to speak to the Prime Minister. An hour later he telephoned to say that Mr. Spyrides had been released. This has caused the deepest satisfaction in Venizelist circles, and it may be considered a definite setback to the sinister influence of the Palace police. It has, however, had the effect of making the Minister more than ever anxious about the Bureau of Information, which at the present moment, owing to the delicate sensibilities of the Greek General Staff, seems much less 'neutral' than it was when we were quite obviously only getting military information about the Turks.*

The only reply of any kind sent to the Minister was that private telegram from Sir Arthur Nicolson saying that the authorities at home did not think me competent to direct the whole Intelligence of the Near East, which nobody had ever suggested I should try to do. Moreover, when Sells came back he was unable to assure us that anything was likely to be done, at any rate until a conference about the naval and military future of the Mediterranean, to be held in Malta early in March, had attempted to solve the problem of Intelligence.

"What did C mean by my going to his superior officer over his head?" I asked Sells.

\* Permanent Under-Secretary at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Blinker holds senior rank to him in the Service."

"Is C a Naval man?"

"Yes, but he's apparently attached to the War Office, though he gets his money from the Foreign Office."

"What's he like?"

"Funny old boy with a wooden leg," said Sells.

I felt like Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island* when Billy Bones warned him so earnestly against the seafaring man with one leg.

However, although we heard nothing from London, our hopes were raised by a telegram from Alexandria which informed us that Feilding was to visit us shortly.

*It is important, the telegram added, that he should take with him when he leaves :*

- (1) *Accounts to the end of January.*
- (2) *Report on work done up to date.*
- (3) *Additions to suspect list for G.H.Q.*
- (4) *Copy of your memorandum on extension of counter-espionage work, which we understand has been forwarded by Minister on to London.*

#### THE GERMAN MAIL AND THE GREEK NEWSPAPERS

It is time to give the reader a little relaxation from these departmental battles of long ago. The tale of our first attempt to capture the German mail will serve. The expulsion of the enemy consuls at Salonica and the occupation of their consulates was followed by similar action in Mytilene and Corfu, and when the news about Corfu reached Athens the enemy Legations began to wonder if even they were immune from violation. The nervousness of the personnel turned to panic when one morning H.M.S. *Folkestone*, a 496-ton armed packet-boat, dropped anchor in Phaleron Bay, for *Folkestone* was presumed to

herald the arrival of the British Fleet. The Turkish Consul at the Piræus hurriedly packed a valise and fled to Athens for protection, followed by many of the Germans living at the Piræus and Phaleron. This incursion upset the nerves of the diplomatic representatives, who began to burn their archives. Smoke poured from the chimneys of the Legations all day long, and during the night what was left of the archives was distributed among various houses in Athens. One packet was sent to Mr. Rhallis, the Minister for Communications. Two other packets were traced by devious ways to the German Girls' School and the Parnassus School. 300,000 francs were withdrawn from the National Bank. Information reached us that von Dueffel, the assistant of the German Marine Attaché, with one of the Secretaries of the Turkish Legation and a Greek courier, had been entrusted with the task of taking the archives that must be preserved to Larissa, whence they were to be sent on to Monastir. I suggested to Ricaud, my French colleague, that we should have a try at intercepting them. Ricaud was agreeable to share expenses, and we enlisted the services of five ex-brigands from Crete who, under the command of the agent Bonaparte, were to go to Larissa and there await instructions.

Twenty-three years have gone by since Bonaparte stood in the little room of those early offices at 3 Visarionos Street, but I still see him swelling with the mystery and importance of his errand, and I still hear the deep unctuous tones of his farewell:

"Skipper," he breathed hoarsely, "if they get me, you'll send my old sergeant's uniform, the one I wore at La Bassée, to my old mother in Salonique?"

"I will, Bonaparte."

He wrung my hand and moved heavily toward the door. Then he came back.

"And, Skipper, you'll tell her I died game?"

"I will, Bonaparte."



With sesquipedalian gait he plunged toward the door, only to turn back once more.

"Skipper," he asked, patting his large posterior, "do I use this?"

"Use that?" I exclaimed. "What are you going to do with that? Sit on the German bags?"

He put his hand in his hip pocket, and drew out a pistol which he looked at reverently.

"I don't want to kill anybody," he protested. "But if it's me or them, Skipper, I have your permish?"

He tapped the pistol significantly.

"You'll exercise your own discretion, Bonaparte, bearing in mind that if you make a blasted fool of yourself I shall disown you."

"Gawd bless you, Skipper, I knew I could trust you to give me a dog's chance."

With this, after once more warmly wringing me by the hand, he plunged through the door, and forth upon his secret errand.

"And a blasted fool he probably will make of himself," Tucker observed pessimistically.

"If you think that, Tucker, I'll send you instead."

"No, no, no, no," Tucker demurred hastily. "There are all these reports to get off for the Alex. bag. I shall be kept pretty busy for the next few days, Captain Z."

We had given Bonaparte before he left an assumed name under which we were to communicate with him, and on the chance that the enemy might travel by train to Larissa instead of by car the railway station was watched day and night.

In the middle of all this, E. C. D. Rawlins, the British Consul at Canea in Crete, suddenly turned up from Salonica in a khaki uniform and announced that Colonel Cunliffe-Owen, the head of Army Intelligence, had told him to recruit brigands in

Athens with a view to holding up the German mail after it left Sorovitch.

Rawlins was in a state of great excitement at the prospect of such an adventure, though he felt a little doubtful of the attitude the Minister might take toward such consular pranks. The idea was to dig a hole in the road and wreck the car. Sells and I sent a joint wire to Salonica, suggesting that in future some co-operation with Athens was desirable in such enterprises, because if the German mail was to be stopped on Greek territory and a serious incident provoked it would be as well to make sure beforehand that we were likely to have our money's worth. Salonica telegraphed back that nothing was going to be done there until a brigand they had dispatched to report upon the feasibility of the scheme had returned. Next day we heard that the enemy with seven pieces of baggage had left by car for Larissa. I at once telegraphed to Bonaparte ordering him to make his dispositions to hold up the car and avoid if possible any loss of life. I instructed him to escape after the attempt across country to Caterina Point, take a caique thence to Salonica, and deliver the papers to Lieut.-Colonel Cunliffe-Owen at A.H.Q. At the same time Sells warned the naval authorities of his possible arrival so that there should be no delay through the action of our patrols.

The next day after this, three of the brigands we had sent with Bonaparte returned to Athens, having been compelled to leave Larissa by the local police. I asked them what Bonaparte had been doing all this while, and they told us that they had not caught a glimpse of him. I then telegraphed again urgently to Bonaparte under his assumed name, but received no reply. We could only conclude that he had been arrested and wondered what was the prudent way to get him released. It happened that George Leith \* came in while we were discussing the best

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 163.

steps to take, and he at once volunteered to go up to Larissa himself, and find out what was happening there. This was a capital solution of the problem, for as a member of the British Naval Mission with the rank of Captain in the Greek Navy he was not likely to be troubled by the attentions of the police. George Leith went first to the post office and found that the two telegrams addressed there to Bonaparte under his assumed name had not been called for. He then went to the chief hotel, and while he was in the lavatory washing his hands he heard from inside one of the cabinets a low voice hoarse with apprehension calling to him:

"Captain Georgie, Captain Georgie! It's me, it's Bonaparte. Can you get me out of here, Captain Georgie? I've had to sit in here for all the last two days, Captain Georgie."

"Well, I've got a bottle of stoppers with me, so come out," said George Leith, "and I'll dose you."

"It's not my stomach, Captain Georgie," Bonaparte breathed from the other side of the door. "It's the police. As soon as I got out of the train at Larissa they started following me around. Then I forgot the name Captain Z gave me, and I didn't dare ask at the post office if there was any telegrams in case they run me in, and oh, my gawd, Captain Georgie, I'm glad you've come. I've had a cruel time, sitting in here for two days and not daring to put my nose outside for fear of being arrested by these Greeks."

Presently under encouragement from George Leith, Bonaparte emerged. Having been reminded of his name, he amassed enough courage to go and fetch his telegrams, after which he got into touch with the two other brigands. Finding that the mail would not leave Larissa until two mornings later he returned with George Leith to Athens and reported to me.

"A nice mess you've made of the first important mission I give you," I said angrily.

Bonaparte held up one large fleshy paw and with the other mopped his forehead with a musk-scented handkerchief.

"Skipper, there was too many for me. Larissa was stinking with police."

"You're nothing but a damned coward," I told him.

"Skipper, that don't come nice from you. Bonaparte is afraid of nothing and nobody within reason. I'm only a sergeant, but I know my duty. Don't say things you'll regret afterwards, Skipper. What could I do locked up for two days in a lavatory? They kept coming and trying the door until I shouted out, 'The next B who tries this B door I'll plug him.' And so I would have, Captain Z. I had a pistol on the seat each side of me. I meant to die fighting. That's Bonaparte. Game to the last, Skipper."

"You great buffoon, you were so frightened that you even forgot the name I'd given you."

"Now, Skipper, that's not a fair thing to say. Nobody can answer for his memory all the time, and that's how I first come into the lavatory. I wanted somewhere I could think quiet what name you give me. I've done the best I could, Skipper. I found out the mail would leave Larissa at eight o'clock this morning in two one-ton motor lorries which will be driven by Red Cross drivers with an armed escort. There are seventeen large pieces of baggage, because the Huns packed up ten more pieces at different stations along the line, and they won't leave Sorovitch for Monastir until ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

It was just before midnight when we received this information, and it took us a three hours' search all over Athens before we found Ricaud, who at once sent off an urgent wire to the French military authorities at Salonica; but unfortunately they arrived at Sorovitch just too late.

Next morning a telegram came from Cunliffe-Owen to say that the man he had entrusted to draw up a plan for intercepting

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the German mail had turned up in Salonica again, and that he was now sending him down to Athens. He added that the fellow had been promised a thousand francs in advance with a bonus if successful, and he asked me to pay him the thousand francs, offering to share the expenses later. I had no sooner received this telegram than a message came from the Legation to announce that a most unpleasant-looking brigand had turned up there inquiring for me, and to ask if I would take him away as soon as possible. The brigand's name was Archondakis, and it would have been hard to find a more obvious bravo of the tougher sort. He was heavily armed with pistols and daggers, and wrapped in a cape lined with sheepskin. He evidently expected that he could depend for his future welfare on me. Of course, we had no use for such a fellow in Athens, but as he knew of the plan to intercept the German mail in Greek territory we could not get rid of him without causing a scandal. To add to my embarrassment I had not a thousand francs to pay him. So I had to offer him two hundred and fifty francs for his expenses and engage him at two hundred and fifty francs a month to act as a 'minder,' much to the satisfaction of Tucker, who loved to fancy that we were living dangerously.

It was true that a couple of attempts had already been made to smash up our car, and a recent attack on Mr. Koutoupis, the editor of the *Nea Hellas*, a fervid Venizelist newspaper, had convinced Tucker that he or I would be the next victim of Royalist spite. Mr. Koutoupis had been set upon by a patrol of soldiers and badly jabbed with their bayonets to cries of 'That's for helping the Entente!' 'That's for writing slanders against the King!'

Another muddle was hatched in Salonica about this time, though in this case the blame did not rest on G.H.Q. but on the Salonica branch of the E.M.S.I.B. One of the Englishmen working with them in Salonica came down to Athens and,

without our being notified of his advent, got into touch with a Venizelist ex-deputy called Triandaphyllou with the object of using him as an intermediary to buy military information from one of the officers of the Greek General Staff. The whole business was bungled. Triandaphyllou was arrested, we had to smuggle the emissary out of Athens, and the Legation had to publish an official *démenti* to the accusation of the Ententophobe Press that the new Bureau of Information was in effect an organization for espionage upon the Greek Army. The affair was particularly exasperating at this moment, because the Ententophobe Press had been making great play with the official announcement of the Greek Government that a Bureau of Information had been attached to the British Legation to deal with the question of passports.

On January 27th the following announcement appeared in the *Nea Hemera* :

SECRET POLICE. Professor Makenzy, the director of the English Secret Police here, has rearranged his offices at Number 3 Visarionos Street.

In the *Embros*, another paper supporting the Government, appeared on the same date the following:

SECRET POLICE OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH IN ATHENS. Some days ago an Anglo-French organization of Secret Police was established in Athens. The different bureaux under the directorship of Mr. Markentzen have been moved from the Pension Merlin, their original centre, to 3 Visarionos Street.

Two days later the *Ephemeris* let loose the following canard:

We have received during the last few days a certain amount of information about the Secret Police of the Allies. The Service, if our information is correct, as we fear it is, is divided into four parts.

## GREEK MEMORIES

### FIRST DIVISION

A service of espionage and counter-espionage for the interior of Greece.

### SECOND DIVISION

A service for conducting espionage in other countries.

### THIRD DIVISION

Oral propaganda in cafés and other centres.

### FOURTH DIVISION

A service of terrorization and other activities even more terrible.

This article went on to say that over two hundred agents were employed who were armed with licences which entitled them to do what they liked without interference from the public authorities. Vast sums were being spent, numbers of motor-cars were being used, and the object of the whole organization was nothing less than the dethronement of King Constantine by creating a revolution in Greece.

This statement was of course contradicted officially by the British and French Legations. The existence of secret police was denied, and it was pointed out that a certain number of employees who were attached to the Passport Bureau for the purpose of making inquiries about applicants for visas to Egypt had been given official cards with their photographs stamped with the Legation seal and countersigned by the Greek Police Authorities.

So much for this mythical body of police, the real existence of which has been assumed even by British writers anxious to rehabilitate the figure of the late King Constantine. There is a good case to be made out for the King without using fairy stories to rebut fairy stories. Unfortunately his advocates have been men without first-hand knowledge of what they were writing about, and either lacking in the discrimination required to estimate the value of hearsay evidence or, if possessing the discrimination, unscrupulous in their abuse of it.

After the contradiction published by the British and French Legations the *Embros* and the *Nea Hemera* announced that they would publish daily an account of my movements and the movements of my chief agents during the previous day. Here is a specimen of the piffle which appeared every morning:

"Yesterday at half-past ten Mr. Makenzy, Director of the Anglo-French Police, received in his office at 3 Visarionos Street, Mr. Geraldini with whom he worked. At 11 o'clock Mr. Makenzy walked to 6 Dragatzani Street and interviewed Messrs. Couker, Gottim, and J. Travlos; thence he drove in a carriage to the English School where he remained several hours working with other agents who came to interview him there."

Geraldini was Zanardi; Couker was Bonaparte; Gottim was presumably Colonel Goudim Lefcovitch, the Russian Military Attaché; and Travlos was a trusty old Greek mariner with American citizenship who acted as doorkeeper.

For a time the Venizelist Press amused themselves by publishing skits on this information and ridiculous accounts of Baron Schenck's day. Then I decided to play a practical joke on the editors of the *Embros* and the *Nea Hemera*.

About five o'clock one afternoon, accompanied by a reporter of the *Patris*, one of the leading Venizelist papers, I went to the offices of the *Embros* and paid for the insertion of an advertisement of a patent soap. After that I went on to the *Nea Hemera* and repeated the business there. Next morning as usual the *Embros* and the *Nea Hemera* announced that I had been in an entirely different place from where I actually was, and the *Patris* was able to ask how it was that such wonderful editorial sleuths had failed to follow me into the offices of their own newspapers and observe that I had paid there for the insertion of those advertisements of soap which had been printed in both the *Embros* and the *Nea Hemera* next morning.



In spite of official contradictions and the ridicule of the Liberal Press the Government Press continued to publish the wildest assertions about the behaviour of the so-called secret police. I hope I have made it perfectly clear that the 'director' of these 'police' had at his disposal about half a dozen agents who had been left on his hands by his predecessor because they had been used for work in Turkey while the Gallipoli campaign was still in being, and that he made use of their services to conduct inquiries into the *bona fides* of prospective travellers to Egypt. Their names were formally notified to the Greek Government and every one of them was given a card with his photograph attached in order that no unauthorized person could claim to be attached to the British Passport Bureau and attempt to extort bribes. Certainly I had secret agents as well; but the last thing such secret agents wanted to do was to bring themselves into the public eye by aggressive action. Yet on page 115 of his book \* Sir Basil Thomson, dealing with January and February of 1916, writes:

"All this time M. Skouloudis must have been spending most of his working days in formulating protests against the unlawful acts of the Allies who had set up a police force of their own. The excuse given by M. Briand was the police force alleged to have been organized by Baron Schenck. Skouloudis asked for evidence of this German organization, but none was forthcoming. Scarcely a day passed without the arrest and search of Greek subjects by these unauthorized police. Since the censor would never allow the newspapers to publish the Greek side to the dispute, French and English opinion became more and more prejudiced against King Constantine and his Government."

The truth is that Mr. Skouloudis did not formulate a single protest during these two months, that he did not ask for any evidence of a German organization, and that there was not a

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece.*

single arrest or search of any Greek subject throughout that period.

On page 113 Sir Basil Thomson writes:

"In January, 1916, King Constantine was heard for the first time in his own defence. He granted an interview to Mr. Paxton Hibben, of the Associated Press, in which he set forth the infringements of his neutrality committed by the Allies and appealed to public opinion in the United States. Hibben's telegram was stopped by the French and British censors, but when he threatened to take it personally to New York the two Governments thought it wiser to let the message go and to reply to it semi-officially."

What really happened is related below.

Paxton Hibben brought me a telegraphic copy of his interview with the King and said to me:

"Don't you sons of bitches call me a pro-German after this. I have given you and the French the finest boost you have had yet. I can't understand a sane man giving his case away as the King has given it away in this interview."

On reading what Hibben had sent off I recognized at once how much the interview would damage the King's reputation for common sense and truthfulness, and awaited the publication of it with some eagerness. Next day Hibben told me that the interview had been stopped by the French censor in Paris. I grumbled to Ricaud at such pudding-headed blindness and said I should do my best to prevent a repetition of it in London. I then explained the whole matter to Sir Francis Elliot. The cabled interview had, of course, been repeated to Malta and London, and Sir Francis at once telegraphed to the Foreign Office urging them to advise the censor to let it pass. As a result of this the interview appeared in the American Press on January 20th, and was reprinted in the local Press on January 23rd.

Meanwhile the King, realizing the indiscretion of his remarks, had tried to have the whole interview stopped; but Hibben, who knew that I was going to do my best to get it published in both America and Great Britain, told the King and Mr. Skouloudis that it was too late to stop it, and said not a word about its having been held up by the French censorship. The comments in the New York Press were so sarcastic that when they were telegraphed back to Athens by Reuter's the Greek censorship forbade publication in Athens. Sir Francis Elliot protested to Mr. Skouloudis against this interference with the liberty of the Press, seeing that there was no martial law and no authority to exercise such a censorship.

It is true that later on Paxton Hibben's telegrams were held up in Malta; but not until they became so scurrilous and mendacious that no censor could possibly have passed them.

#### PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Nothing of much importance took place in January after the new Chamber met, and although there were continual rumours that martial law would be imposed this never materialized, largely owing to the strong line taken by Sir Francis Elliot with the Government. At the same time the Palace police under Captain Chryssospathi, a body of secret police entirely independent of the ordinary secret police and controlled directly by the King, behaved as if martial law had actually been declared, and outrages against Venizelists were frequent. Members of our famous 'police' were arrested from time to time; but when the Palace police discovered that such arrests only caused me the inconvenience of going down to the police-courts and waiting till they were released they learned to give up such ineffective terrorism and contented themselves with posting two or three frowsy creatures at either end of Visarionos Street. They gave up even this pretence at invigilation after I took to sending Bonaparte out

with a camera to photograph them, for in Bonaparte's hand even a Kodak took on the aspect of a lethal weapon. The Government Press were always accusing the Venizelists of fomenting a revolution, and the apologists of King Constantine suggest that Mr. Venizelos actually was planning to dethrone the King even at this early date. All I can testify is that my French colleagues were unanimous in deploring the late Prime Minister's inactivity.

"*Il ne veut faire rien*," Ricaud used to declare indignantly.

No doubt the French were already urging him to make some definite move ; but Mr. Venizelos, remembering possibly some of the historical disasters that premature risings had sustained through a too credulous trust in French help at the critical moment, wisely remained quiet.

At the end of the month we moved into the new offices that were presently to be known as the Annexe of the British Legation. When Tucker and I inspected our headquarters, which seemed so light and so spacious after the funny little cretonne-hung rooms at Visarionos Street, we wondered if our appeals for clerical assistance would ever be answered. We were both of us beginning to feel the strain of rushing about all day and sitting up all night to write and dictate and type out our reports.

The arrival of Feilding\* from Alexandria to go into the question of the future of Intelligence work in Athens roused in us fresh hopes of assistance. Before war broke out Feilding had been the Secretary to the Society of Psychical Research, and his approach to the whole question of Intelligence was that of one investigating a house alleged to be haunted. I think it would be fair to say that most members of the Society of Psychical Research hope that there are such things as ghosts, and in reading through their transactions I have always considered that they erred on the side of kindness and credulity. Feilding was most enthusiastic over the prospect of catching spies, and could

\* Lieut. the Hon. Everard Feilding, R.N.V.R.

he have had a free hand he would certainly have given us all and more than the means we wanted. Unfortunately, he assumed that when a man was sent to make a report on an organization like ours, attention would be paid to his recommendations. He apparently thought that as soon as he had interviewed the Military Intelligence people at Salonica and the Naval authorities at Mudros everything would be done to help our particular branch of the E.M.S.I.B. to shine like a good deed in a naughty world. I remember his saying that he should ask the Vice-Admiral for a couple of trawlers to be put at our service, and I remember thinking that, if he could believe we should get them, he had only one foot upon this solid earth. As for clerical assistance, he was convinced that as soon as he arrived back in Alexandria clerks and stenographers would be showered upon us, and that the welkin would ring with our typewriters.

"*When* you get back to Alexandria, Feilding," I said, "but when do you think you *will* get back?"

"I am going on from here to Salonica to see everybody of importance and explain the workings of the E.M.S.I.B. to General Howell, the Chief of Staff, to Colonel Cunliffe-Owen of M.I., and to Rear-Admiral Nicolson. Then I thought I would go straight back to Alexandria."

"Well, if you get back by the middle of March you'll be lucky," I said.

Feilding looked a little worried at this.

"Is communication really so difficult as all that?"

"Since V left Athens," I told him, "only two ships have sailed to Alexandria. And as one of those left the day before it was advertised to sail we did not get our mail-bag on board. How do our people in Alexandria think they can possibly run a branch in Athens or a branch in Salonica by concentrating all communication in Alexandria? Could anything be more fatuous than the telegram we received the other day to say that

the only counter-espionage which would not be run by Alexandria was Egyptian counter-espionage? As for my position it is becoming impossible. I have been notified to the Greek Government as the officer in charge of a Bureau of Information attached to the British Legation, and do you seriously suppose that when Sir Francis gives me an order it will have to wait until I have had authority from Alexandria to carry it out? And do you suppose that if I want to notify Salonica that a suspect is on his way there it is going to help anybody if I have to notify Egypt in order to persuade them to notify Salonica? Surely you must see that the waste of time and money is endless under such conditions, and I hope that, if you do manage to get back to Alexandria before the war is over, you will represent our difficulties here and persuade the Alexandria people that we are not trying to shake off their control, but merely trying to give them an efficient branch of the E.M.S.I.B."

"You may rely on me," Feilding promised, "I feel I've plumbed the situation. And now do you think you can borrow a top hat for me?"

"A top hat?" I echoed. "What on earth do you want a top hat for?"

"Why, I have asked for an audience of the King, and one wears a top hat on these occasions, I believe. Of course, I could go in uniform, but a lieutenant . . . that would be a little difficult."

I asked Tucker if he had a top hat, and he said he had one but that it was in Constantinople. So I went round to the Legation and asked Sir Francis if he had a top hat, explaining that Feilding wanted to go and see the King. As I remember, Sir Francis did have a spare top hat and was willing to lend it, and I suppose Feilding managed to borrow a frock coat from somebody else, for at ten o'clock next morning he was off to see the King, looking for the first time like the Secretary of the

Society of Psychical Research. The chief thing I remember about that interview is that the King promised Feilding that if his permission were asked he would always allow parties to land and look for submarine bases on Greek territory.

"But I don't believe there are any submarine bases," I told Feilding. "What I believe is that crews from German submarines land in remote spots and obtain fresh supplies of milk and eggs and vegetables. I believe, too, that the German Marine Attaché and perhaps the German Consul at the Piræus obtain for their submarines as much shipping information as they can."

I could see that Feilding did not like the idea of not believing in submarine bases, and he fell into one of those almost trance-like meditations in which no doubt before the war he used to consider the case for or against a haunted house.

"I also think," he went on, wagging his forefinger at me, a favourite gesture of his, "that if we offer to lend him a reasonable sum of money, say £15,000,000, the King will undoubtedly come in on our side."

"I suppose you would like to telegraph that conjecture to Alexandria," I suggested.

"Yes, I should certainly like to telegraph that information to Alexandria," Feilding answered primly, and with that he at once sat down to draft the telegram.

A day or two later Feilding departed to Salonica, where he wrote me several letters about his discouraging experiences with sceptical generals and admirals or obstructive colonels and captains, none of whom expressed any appreciation of or desire for the services of the E.M.S.I.B. He found, too, that communicating with spirits was much easier than communicating with Egypt.

On February 17th, nearly three weeks after leaving Athens, he was writing:

"I see no immediate prospect of communicating with Egypt. Gawd knows how long I shall be stuck here!"

I nearly telegraphed:

"Try one of the Pharaohs."

In the end Feilding arrived back in Alexandria early in March just as V was setting off to take part in the Intelligence conference at Malta, at which C was present and also Sells. Although Feilding's happy faith in the unseen must have been shaken a bit by his visit to Athens and Salonica, by the tone of his letter to me he now believed in ghosts again as profoundly as ever. According to him, what was still known as the Intelligence Section, Branch B, Alexandria, was "*in process of great development*," and the whole of the counter-espionage work was to be concentrated under a galloping Major, "*a far-reaching well-thought-out scheme of which I have as yet only just begun to touch the fringe*." He added, with that optimism which was so endearing, that later on some of them in Alexandria would probably go round the various centres and explain this scheme. He then went on to say that my requests for further clerical assistance were well in hand and that funds, motor-cars, patrol-boats, telescopic cameras, and the deuce knows what not besides, would shortly be at my disposal. Finally, in a postscript he announced that all the counter-espionage work in Egypt and everywhere else would henceforth be run from Alexandria by experts, and that the V Bureau would soon grow into a huge organization.

A New Jerusalem of Intelligence dazzled my senses, but I regret to say that when I read the good news to Tucker, he merely tapped his head with that gesture which signifies a disbelief in somebody's mental stability.

"Did he say anything about me getting a commission?"



"No, Tucker, but he has put etc., etc., etc., after the telescopic cameras, so I think your commission is probably included among those ample abbreviations."

We gave up 3 Visarionos Street soon after this, and Tucker and I lived for a while in a bleak flat, the chief feature of which was the size of the chandelier in the dining-room. It took the Palace police over two months to find out the new address, much to my relief, let me add, for in April the bugs woke from their winter sleep and fell upon Tucker and myself with avidity, and I was glad to move from it.

## CHAPTER II: FEBRUARY

### THE MYSTERIOUS SAILOR

MY chief consolation for the recurrent departmental squabbles, which wasted so much of our energy, were the steady additions to our knowledge of what was going on in the German Legation, thanks to that master agent, Davy Jones.\* The only other person who knew of his existence was Tucker, but I would not even trust Tucker with the task of assimilating the information he provided three times a week, for Tucker's buoyant temperament always led him to ask leading questions, and to the extraction of significant and accurate information from an agent leading questions are fatal. Agents respond like fortune-tellers to what they think their clients want. My method with Davy Jones was never to let him see that I was more interested in one scrap of his information than in another, for if I had, he, with those milky blue eyes of his ever on the main chance, would have neglected what might have been of importance for what he knew was interesting me particularly and was therefore likely to be profitable to himself. The job of interviewing him regularly three times a week at different residences was comparatively easy, for we had numerous rooms all over the city, not one of which was discovered by either the Palace police or the agents of the enemy. The stiff problem was how to find a way for him to communicate with me when he had urgent news. In the end, I decided that rather than compromise him by over-eagerness the urgent news would have to wait. This caution on my part lost us one or two valuable

\* *Athenian Memories*, pp. 356-60.

coups; but we were more than repaid by the information gleaned over the six months he continued to remain the unsuspected porter of the German Legation.

The information brought to me by Davy Jones, combined with what was coming in from elsewhere, decided me to attempt an appreciation of the various activities upon which the Germans were engaged in Athens. To my great regret a copy of this appreciation, which extended to eighty pages of closely-typed foolscap, is no longer in my possession, for I should have liked to reprint some of it in order to show how accurately Hasluck and I between us worked out as early as February, 1916, the main details of the German organization from a mass of confused and contradictory material. The activities of Baron Schenck, who was considered the arch spy and intriguer, we discovered as early as this were actually confined to propaganda. Thanks to Davy Jones's sharp ears we were able to feel sure that between Schenck and the German Legation there was no kind of co-operation, that indeed on the contrary there was bitter rivalry. We were also able to feel fairly sure that Schenck was not occupying himself with espionage. We proved, too, that there was co-operation between the German Legation and a certain Hoffmann, who had been reported at the end of December, 1915, to have returned to the Piræus from a second visit to Germany via Sofia. Hoffmann was a commission agent who had long been resident in Greece, where he had married a Greek wife. The more we heard about him the more certain we were that he was the chief organizer of German espionage in Greece for countries outside it. Yet we could not trace any of his possible agents to Egypt, and so far as we could make out he seemed chiefly occupied with espionage in Italy. For months we were hearing of these agents of his, and time after time we had one of them stopped at the frontier and searched, but always without inculcating any of them. In the end I began to wonder if Hoffmann was not a

bogy which we had ourselves created. As I could never trace any communication between him and the German Legation, I was at a loss for some months to know how he was communicating with Berlin unless it were through Plock, the German Consul at the Piræus. Plock was continually reported to be engaged in the supply of benzine to submarines, but since by this time I had made up my mind there was hardly any supplying of benzine to submarines in Greece, and that except for casual purchases of fresh meat and other food there was no re-victualing, I did not encourage an undue amount of attention to Plock's activities.

Then one day Davy Jones told me that on February 7th there had visited the German Legation a mysterious seafaring man, whom he described as wearing an old overcoat with rotten lapels, a brown velvet cap, and a big blue and white bird's-eye neckerchief. His complexion was florid and he spoke English, but not ordinary English. When I suggested that it might be American, Davy Jones insisted that he had heard enough American speech to be positive it was not American.

"I think he is a very important man, capitaine," said Davy Jones, his milky blue eyes clouding over with that film which gave them a look compounded of greed, cunning, and a relish in his own information that was almost lecherous.

"Why do you think he is important?"

It seemed that the mysterious sailor had spent an hour and a half closeted with Grancy and Falkenhausen over a map, and that every time Davy Jones had gone into the room to make up the fire he had noticed how the seafaring man's florid countenance was always taking on a deeper tinge under the excitement of the colloquy. Moreover, the Marine Attaché had called the Military Attaché into his room, and it was never Falkenhausen's habit to allow his time to be wasted over unimportant people.

"Grancy can always be listening to *bêtises*," Davy Jones scoffed, "but Falkenhausen will go for kick one man down the steps of the Legation who comes with *bêtises*."

"What were they doing with this map?"

"They put fingers upon it," Davy Jones said. "But when I come into the room all look up at me and say nothings, but once when I open the door pretending I think Grancy will call for me I hear the sailorman to say some words about green balls. I think you can know what are those green balls, capitaine?" Davy Jones went on, his milky blue eyes glowing like a cat's. "And I think for this informations I will be having another hundred drachmas a month?"

It was clear enough that the green balls referred to were the glass buoys used by drifters to keep up the anti-submarine nets. It was equally clear that something was afoot in connexion with submarines. However, I did my best not to let Davy Jones see the excitement I was feeling at the prospect of at last obtaining positive proof of Grancy's activity as the Submarine Attaché to the German Legation.

"Well, it may be important or it may not be," I told Davy Jones. "But please don't make any more investigations on your own account at the Legation, for if it is important they'll become suspicious over the number of times you find it necessary to make up the fire in Grancy's room."

We decided that Bonaparte was the best of our agents to entrust with the task of identifying the mysterious sailor and finding out his apparent occupation. Bonaparte soon discovered him to be living in a low-class hotel opposite the Customs House at the Piræus, and further inquiries established that he was on a Swedish steamer, the *Hermes*, lying in the harbour. Finally, Bonaparte got into touch with the man, whose name other agents had given as Captain Stefani. To Bonaparte the mysterious sailor declared that it was John Lestage, and we never heard of

another name for him. After a fortnight of what Bonaparte assured me was superhuman detective work he came swelling with pride and sweating with excitement to announce that Lestage had consented to visit me in the Annexe.

About six o'clock in the evening Lestage was ushered into my office accompanied by another seafaring man with a rolling gait and a rolling watery eye, the only one he had. I was struck with the testimony to the accuracy of Davy Jones's observation that Lestage provided. Usually when people described by our agents appeared in person they were unrecognizable. Not so Lestage. Except that his velvet cap turned out to be corduroy, every detail was exact. The two mariners sat down, and Lestage told me how difficult it had been for Bonaparte to persuade him to come and see me.

"That's right, boy," put in Bonaparte, who was contemplating the two mariners like the proud father of twins. "You thought Bonaparte was going to do it on you, eh? Not me. Didn't I tell you I was going to bring you to see a gentleman? Well, look at Captain Z! Did you ever . . ."

"Will you be good enough to hold your tongue, Bonaparte," I interrupted.

At this Lestage's companion turned and winked at me with the eyelid of his raw eyeless socket. I looked quickly away with an inward shudder to talk further with Lestage. He spoke in fluent English, but like Davy Jones I was puzzled by the accent. I asked him what had taken him to the German Legation, and he replied that I could ask as often as I liked, but that he would never tell. However, he offered for the sum of five thousand dollars to reveal all the horrors which had led up to the loss of H.M.'s transport *Malinche*.\* When I pooh-poohed the notion that any information he was likely to offer was worth fifty pence,

\* This is how the name appears in my notes, but I cannot be sure of it and have no record of the details of her loss.

Lestage turned sulky and displayed an obvious anxiety to retire from the Annexe. I fancied that he had only come there at all as a piece of bravado to mark the contempt he had openly expressed for all the agents I had sent to shadow his movements. I was nearly piqued into taxing him with that ninety minutes' conversation with Grancy and Falkenhausen at the German Legation, but since to have done that would have been fatal alike to the chance of finding out any more about Grancy's submarine schemes, or to maintaining Davy Jones any longer as porter at the Legation, I reluctantly let the mysterious sailor take himself off with his one-eyed friend. A few days after this he vanished from the Piræus, and I supposed he had been frightened away by our interest in his movements. A week or two later, however, he turned up again in Athens, and once more visited Grancy and Falkenhausen at the German Legation. On this occasion when Davy Jones interrupted the conversation with his usual excuse of pulling up the curtains or making up the fire, the Military Attaché ordered him sharply out of the room, so that he heard only one sentence of the conversation; but that sentence might be significant.

"Our aeroplanes will do the rest," is what Falkenhausen was saying as Davy Jones put his head round the door. However, before we could make any further inquiries Lestage had vanished again.

Now that I have started his story I may as well finish it, though many weeks were to pass by before we found out all about him. A man answering his description was reported to us from Salonica some time in April, and shortly after this he reappeared in Athens and was discovered to be living with a Serbian refugee woman in a squalid tumble-down house near the waterside at the Piræus. This time we could not trace any visit to the German Legation, but he hired a boat and spent most of his time fishing in the harbour until presently he was off again,

leaving the woman at the Piræus. Bonaparte had a scheme for renting an empty house next door and breaking through the partition wall next time the mysterious sailor was staying with his mistress in order to frighten him into confessing what his game was. I ruled out this elaborate and expensive way of breaking into a house, and as things turned out it was fortunate for Bonaparte that I did. We were, of course, unable to usurp the privilege of the police by breaking into a house in a neutral capital from the street. Such respect for International Law at this date may strike the apologists for the other side as a piece of exaggerated sensitiveness, in view of what was done later in 1916; but in spite of what has been stated our agents were never allowed to go about breaking into people's houses at will. Lestage was back presently, but he was off again almost as soon as his return was discovered.

In the end it was Lestage's own folly that destroyed him. It happened some time in July that a French destroyer put in for a couple of days at the Piræus. On the first day of her stay I met her captain at lunch, at which we talked about the political situation in Athens and the various German activities there. I instanced the elusive and mysterious sailor as the sort of problem which we were called upon to solve, but which without the help of regular police was really insoluble. The captain turned to me and said he believed the man I had been speaking about had been on board his own ship that morning hobnobbing with the crew. He had been struck by the man's presence, because as far as he had been able to make out he was a Frenchman. By this time I had heard many nationalities attributed to Lestage, from American to Norwegian; yet nobody had ever suggested before that he was French. To be sure, Lestage was a French name, but I had never really accepted it as his own. Ricaud was at lunch too. He had been given all the details about Lestage that I had myself. Looking upon him, however, as our prey,



he had done nothing more than inquire tenderly from time to time after our chances of finding out what he was up to. Now, when Ricaud heard that Lestage might be a Frenchman, this at once made him his prey, and he suggested that, if the captain was sure of the man's nationality, he should make an excuse to detain him in his ship until it reached Melos, the harbour of which island was in the occupation of the French Fleet. There, no doubt, Lestage, frightened at finding himself kidnapped by his compatriots, would soon explain what he was really up to in Greece. The captain promised to do this, and though I was a little loath to call in the aid of the French to solve the problem of the mysterious sailor's activities, I was by this time so much in despair over the failure of our own agents that I assented to the plan.

It was curious that a man as crafty and as prudent as Lestage should overlook danger from another quarter and fall so easily into this obvious trap. Yet he did, and twenty-four hours later my French colleague, with sparkling, triumphant eyes, announced to me that the suspected spy was now safe in Melos harbour, and that he himself was off for a couple of days to conduct his examination. Would I be good enough to give him all the data at my disposal?

A week later Ricaud came back from Melos, much discouraged.

"*Eh bien, mon cher ?*"

"*Ah, c'était la barbe, vous savez !*" he replied, gnawing at his moustache.

After two days of persistent interrogation, he had learnt nothing more about Lestage than that he claimed to earn a living by fishing at the Piræus, and to have been in the Levant for the last fifteen years, with the exception of one voyage which he had made to England with an Italian cargo boat, whence he had returned in the *Malinche*, reported to have been tor-

pedoed off Malta. His nationality he now asserted to be Dutch. Ricaud was depressed, for it seemed inevitable that Lestage would have to be released. Already the Senior Naval Officer at Melos, an unimaginative greybeard, according to Ricaud, was pressing for more evidence to justify the irregular course taken in carrying off a man of unknown nationality from a neutral port.

I made up my mind that we would try to provide further evidence by bluffing Lestage's Serbian mistress into letting us search the rooms where she lived at the Piræus. I said nothing of this scheme to Ricaud, because, good friends though we were, it was always necessary to keep our end up, and even by July some of the French 'stunts' in Athens had become suspect. I was above all things anxious to obtain unimpeachable evidence that the German Marine Attaché was engaged in active espionage, and I knew that the Foreign Office would never accept any evidence of it provided by the French Intelligence.

I decided that Bonaparte was entitled to be given a chance of circumventing the mysterious sailor who had so long eluded him. That night I sent him down to the house in the hope that he would score a success. However, on second thoughts I told Tucker to go as well, and sent with him Lazarevitch, who was my chief Serbian agent, for by then the whole of the Serbian counter-espionage outside the Area of Operations was in my charge.

When they knocked on the door an old woman put her head out of an upper window and cursed them for thieves in the language of the country. They said they had important business with Lestage, and finally, though to this day I do not know why, she came down and let them in.

It was a tumbledown, malodorous, damp, ill-lighted place, permeated with a smell of oil, seaweed, bad drains, and coffee, and on that windy night it creaked like an old barge at anchor.

The mysterious sailor's mistress, a girl of about eighteen, but already a swarthy barbaric creature, eyed the intruders wildly from a corner of the room until they spoke to her, whereupon she completely covered her face with a bright red and yellow silk handkerchief and stamped a foot whenever they approached her. They explained that Lestage had begged them to collect and take away the papers he had left there. The old woman volubly protested that there were no papers in the house.

"They're behind there!" Tucker exclaimed, and in a moment one of the agents had pulled the only picture from the wall. The old woman raised her stick in a fury and struck out right and left; but they pinioned her at last, horrible and fetid old bundle of rags though she was, and while one of them kept an eye on the girl, the others tapped the wall. It sounded hollow. Bonaparte picked up a chopper that was lying in the fireplace and made to strike at what looked like fresh plaster. As he raised the chopper the old woman shrieked out for Tucker to stop him, and the Serbian girl yelled something to Lazarevitch, who in turn gave another yell and snatched the chopper away from Bonaparte. Bonaparte asked him what he was playing at, and Lazarevitch said the girl declared there was dynamite in the wall. It was now Bonaparte's turn to go pale.

"My gawd, Skipper, I haven't been so near Kingdom Come since La Bassée," he said to me afterwards. "It was hot. Very hot. Oh yes, very hot!"

The old woman, seeing that her visitors were determined to get at what was behind the plaster, however gingerly they might set about the task, supplied some tools, and with much caution the plaster was cut away.

Out tumbled a quantity of papers—small greasy notebooks, picture postcards, newspaper cuttings, and old letters; but there was no sign of dynamite, or indeed of any kind of explosive, either in machinery or in material. After a long argument with

the old woman, who wailed that they had spoilt her abode, Tucker paid her for the damage—rather generously, because, after all, Athens was a neutral city—and they made up their minds that the dynamite had probably been an excuse invented by Lestage himself to keep his landlady, or whatever she was, from prying into his secrets. Obviously there was nothing more to be done with the old woman, and they left her counting up the money.

When they came back to the Annexe we set to work to examine the haul, which was laid out in exhibits:

Exhibit A: Sixty-three letters from various people scattered about the Mediterranean, some written in English, some in French, some in *lingua franca*, some in Italian, but all containing, between the lines of conventional gossip in black ink, disjointed sentences in faded brown, of which I remember one, which may be considered a type of the rest: '*In Port Iero a big ship loading, a good mark, think she will sail*' on some date I forget.

Exhibit B: A list of correspondents, some of whom were in the employment of the Allies and could be arrested immediately.

Exhibit C: A photograph of Jean Lestage in the uniform of a French matelot, with two little girls, very prim and pretty, one on either side of him.

Exhibit D: A box of naval buttons and a red pompon.

Exhibit E: Some two hundred Press cuttings about anti-militarist associations and the hopes of universal peace.

Exhibit F: Some two hundred Press cuttings extending back for fourteen years, and all relating to explosions in every part of the globe.

Exhibit G: A set of plans of some mechanical invention, very neatly drawn in pencil, which, so far as we could make out, had to do with a way of obtaining a bomb-sight for an aeroplane without dropping a trial bomb.

Exhibit H: A small cardboard box, in which, wrapped very carefully in cotton wool, were six or seven small sticks of what looked like vermicelli.

"My god, Captain Z!" somebody shouted. "Don't you know what that is?"

I shook my head.

"My god, it's fulminate of mercury, and there's enough there to blow up the whole of the Legation."

I laid the box gently down upon my desk, and Bonaparte by producing from his pocket the mysterious sailor's corduroy cap relieved the strain of trying to pretend we had not been frightened.

"Skipper," he said, "after all the hot work I done chasing round after this cap, I thought you wouldn't mind if I kept it as a souvenir. Lestage won't want it any more now, not after this little lot."

I told Bonaparte he could keep the cap if the man were condemned, and he carried it about with him for several months like a scalp, until somebody with whom he had quarrelled stole it from him and, according to Bonaparte, stole at the same time the *pickelhaübes* of four Germans whom he claimed to have bayoneted at La Bassée.

The last exhibit was a greasy old pocket-book, bound in black shiny cloth, the opening sentences of which, written in a queer medley of ill-spelt French and worse-spelt English, attracted my curiosity.

The first picture I got from the diary was of a man standing outside the French Consulate-General in Montreal on a hot

deadening August day in 1914 and reading the proclamation of the Republic's amnesty to all deserters from the Army and Navy on condition of their surrendering themselves before a certain date. Lestage, who was a native of St. Nazaire in Brittany, had joined the Navy fifteen years before as a boy, had loathed it, and had taken an opportunity to desert on the occasion of his ship's visit to Montreal. He had apparently prospered more or less, though his diary seemed to indicate that he could have prospered more if he had not been at once an idealist, an enthusiast, and, worst of all, an inventor. At first he seemed to have thought about nothing except explosives, to his interest in which the large collection of Press cuttings bore witness; and not an anarchist can have flung a bomb in Europe nor a powder-magazine blown up in America but that he seemed to have gloated over the details of outrage and accident alike.

There was nothing in his diary about anti-militarism and world peace; but I thought I was right in supposing from the Press cuttings on that subject that his mind must have run on the possibility of paradoxically bringing both about by violent means. Evidently what is called mechanical ingenuity of every kind had appealed to him, and for some time before the War—he was employed in a motor and bicycle works—his imagination had been obsessed by the future of aeroplanes. Gradually in the course of this raging self-revelation transpired his real reason for taking advantage of the amnesty, which was that he had been confident of being attached to the Air Service of his country, with splendid opportunities before him to apply practically his dreams of invention in the very direction that most appealed to him. Instead of that, as soon as he was taken back into the French Navy under the amnesty, he was put on board a trawler on the Newfoundland Patrol, and in reading through the record of his feelings on board that filthy trawler I could not help feeling sorry for the poor wretch, such a depth of disillusionment

quivered in the blasphemous and obscene curses which, half in French, half in English, were scabbled across the pages. At Halifax in the spring of 1915 he had been given shore leave, and he wrote of meeting a man with the same name as himself with whom he had forgathered for rum in some quayside tavern. Their possession of the same name seemed to have engendered a kind of drunken affection, which apparently ended in the other Lestage's revealing to our Lestage that in New York a German agent had given him a time-bomb. This could be set to explode for any time from two minutes to two months, and in his cups he boasted that when the opportunity came he should blow up his ship in some port,\* perhaps in this very port of Halifax, and, provided that he was able to get back to New York, earn enough to keep him rich for the rest of his life. Our Lestage must have envied this namesake such an opportunity, and when later on he heard of the loss of the *Malinche* he must have made up his mind that the man who had done it was his drunken namesake.

This is the only explanation I have for his offer to reveal for five thousand dollars what happened to the *Malinche*. The late autumn of 1915 saw Lestage on a French trawler in the Mediterranean, and winter time brought him often to Salonica. Here he found himself, whenever he had leave ashore, surrounded by soldiers and sailors; he could hear the buzz of acroplanes; he could feast his eyes upon mighty ammunition dumps. Here he was told of the loss of the *Malinche*, and perhaps met one of her crew. Here he heard of a German Consulate, and here he was continually being asked questions by inquisitive Jews about ships and other matters in which Jews were not usually interested. Here then he decided to desert, because he would

\* In the *Daily Mail* of May 20th, 1932, there was an account of Captain Fritz Joubert Duquesne, a Boer, who was alleged to have sunk the Holt liner *Tennyson* with a time-bomb in 1916.

evidently be able to turn his knowledge to profitable account, and revenge himself upon his own ungrateful unimaginative country. In the diary he gave a vivid description of his preliminary bargaining with the Jewish promoter of desertions who offered for a certain sum to arrange for the successful desertion of himself and two French soldiers from the front lines. He wrote with gusto an account of their costumes—they were all dressed up as Turks—and I seemed to hear again that low chuckle of contempt I had heard in my own office when he spoke of Bonaparte's efforts to find out his game, as he described the dim interior at the back of a shop in the Salonica *ghetto*, and of himself and his companions munching chestnuts over a brazier while, as he wrote with fourteen 'r's' to express that contempt, '*Nous avant [sic] bigrement foutu toux les g-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-and's detectives of la g-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-ande France.*'

Two days later he arrived safely in Athens, and the diary stopped.

It was easy enough to understand why the diary stopped. The visit to Grancy was paid on the evening of the day he arrived in Athens, and thenceforth his mind was occupied partly in establishing his information bureau for Grancy about the movement of ships in these waters; but chiefly, I could not help thinking, in trying to perfect his invention for a bomb-sight that would eliminate the necessity of a trial bomb from attacking aeroplanes.

I was moved by the revelation this gave me of a man's disillusionment, and I did my best to save Lestage from being shot; but the only result of my intercession was to lose that precious diary, which I should have liked to keep, at any rate long enough to have had it copied. Writing as I am from memory of something I read through only twice twenty-three years ago I am unable to convey the poignancy of that record of a thwarted life.

If the only thing against Lestage had been his desertion and



espionage, the French naval authorities might perhaps have extended a conditional pardon; but a closer examination of his papers established that he had successfully negotiated for the enemy several explosions of ammunition dumps in the course of their air raids.

"Our aeroplanes will do the rest," Davy Jones had heard Falkenhausen say.

This was too much for the French, and he was shot together with the six out of his seventeen confederates that were in Salonica. The others escaped, being in neutral ports.

Throughout the proceeding of the court-martial Lestage remained sullen and mute until the plans of his invention for a bomb-sight were produced by the prosecuting officer. Then he broke into a passion of blasphemy, calling down upon his country the curse of God; but after this ultimate outburst, he said not another word until immediately before his execution, when he asked if it could be postponed until the arrival of the mail from Canada. This request was not granted. For some time after his capture letters had been arriving addressed to him, Poste Restante, Piræus. These were always intercepted by one of our agents, and among them was found additional evidence of marine espionage. The letters gradually grew fewer and finally ceased arriving; but the week after he was shot a final letter arrived, this time with the Montreal postmark, which was brought to me. Written in an upright schoolboard hand, it ran:

*My dear Father,*

*Thank you very much for the Turkish Delight. Mother is quite well and doing well with the laundry. The Turkish Delight was fine. Candies were fine, too.*

*Love from*

*Marie Jeanne*

There was no address. I suppose he had forbidden such an indiscretion, and as I read the letter I remembered Exhibit C: a photograph of Jean Lestage in the uniform of a French matelot with two little girls, very prim and pretty, one on either side of him—waiting now eternally for another box of Turkish-delight.

## SERBIAN COUNTER-ESPIONAGE

Some time in January an opportunity had occurred for our 'police' to render some help over a tiresome little personal affair to Mr. Balougitch, the Serbian Minister in Athens, since when he had been most anxious to help us in every way. He was a genial old gentleman, or what seemed to me then an old gentleman, with a large bushy beard, and he always reminded me of a bob-tailed sheepdog. Early in February he told Sir Francis Elliot that the services of one of the most reliable agents of the Serbian police were at his disposal in Athens, and he suggested that this man Lazarevitch should be attached to the Intelligence Department of the British Legation under my orders, his salary being paid by the Serbian Government. Sir Francis thought this an excellent arrangement, and Lazarevitch came under my orders. He was a pleasant, pink-faced, round-headed man whose hair was always clipped as short as moleskin. He spoke a fluent tinny French, and was afraid of nothing on land, though a great coward at sea. I once had occasion to send him up to Salonica on a mission at a time when the German and Austrian submarines were making themselves particularly unpleasant, and Tucker, who had a fellow-feeling for anybody entrusted with an unwelcome task, appealed to me to let Lazarevitch go by land instead of by steamer as arranged. I sent for Lazarevitch and asked him if he was frightened of being torpedoed. He said frankly that he was.

"Well, well," I told him, "we must all be prepared to die for our country in these times."

"Oui, mon capitaine," Lazarevitch tinkled in reply, "*Je suis très content mourir pour ma patrie. Mais vous savez, être noyé n'est pas mourir pour la patrie.*"

Nevertheless he had to go by the steamer, and, as I was told afterwards, spent the whole journey on his knees praying before an ikon of St. Nicolas.

Three days before the Serbian Minister handed over the Serbian counter-espionage in Athens to us I had received this telegram from London through Alexandria:

*The German Intelligence at Florina is now under Volmeers. Mackenzie should be instructed to take steps to watch developments. Keep us informed result of his inquiries sending full particulars of Volmeers, etc., to us.*

That was on February 9th. On February 10th I replied to this:

*I heard of Volmeers in December, but his existence could not be proved until copies of documents found in Salonica Consulate raid reached British Minister after repeated requests toward end of January. If an agent is to be sent to Florina please instruct as I do not want to poach on Salonica activities. It would be a dangerous post for an agent, and he would have to be well paid. To-day German Legation sent five hundred francs to the Prefect of Florina.*

I followed up this telegram the next day with the announcement that the Serbian Government had entrusted us with Serbian counter-espionage in Athens. I added that owing to this I could now obtain good Serbian agents for Florina, Vodena, and Sorovitch, and asked for authority to do so.

On February 13th the following reply came from Alexandria:

*You should have referred to us before taking on Serbian Counter-Espionage. Our Salonica branch has been in touch with Serbian Intelligence, and has been expending considerable sums on agents recommended to them, but without any results. Send further details about scope of Serbian work and what liability you have accepted. We have not heard of any good agents for Florina. You should communicate with Salonica before employing them as Florina is their district.*

I replied to this on February 14th:

*Agents for Florina: I have as I said no wish to poach on Salonica Intelligence, but as London telegraphing on February 9th instructed me through you to report on Florina I wish for authorization to appoint necessary agents.*

There was no answer to this from Alexandria; but on February 18th Salonica telegraphed:

*We do not require agents at Florina and could in case of need find them here ourselves.*

To this I replied next day:

*Precisely, but report on German agents in Florina will be gratefully received here.*

On February 21st I wrote to Alexandria:

*After all these telegrams it does not seem to me that I am much nearer to answering the questions about Volmeers, and as I imagine*

*our Salonica people have no counter-espionage agent at Florina I still think it would be a good plan to send one from here.*

Alas, there was no boat sailing from the Piræus to Alexandria until March 10th. So on March 8th I was writing a little irritably:

*I gather from Feilding's rather optimistic letter that an entire reorganization of the Alexandria Intelligence, particularly of counter-espionage, is in process of being carried out, and I understand from him that Athens must never do anything more than ask for information. Heaven knows I have done nothing but ask for information for the last six weeks, but where is the information about Florina? Or Salonica? . . . This sort of leap-frog between Salonica and Alexandria over Athens is really most depressing. To-day, for instance, I received back from Salonica under the heading 'Information supplied to Athens by Salonica' the contents of a telegram I had sent to them! If you instruct all your people to send anything to do with individual activities of the enemy in copy to me or to the Minister at the same time as they are sent to you, many telegrams will be saved and an enormous amount of coal will not go to Newcastle. Here we have Volmeers wandering about Athens, casually seen by an agent, and lost in the crowd of carnival. Had he been signalled to us from Florina, we should have made preparations to shadow him effectively.*

Do not let it be supposed that I am making mountains out of molehills. I could give fifty examples of telegraphic cross-purposes at this period, and the muddle over the Florina agents should be taken as typical not exceptional. Probably what saved my reason was a sympathetic understanding of our difficulties in the Legation itself. Sir Francis Elliot never required to have the most trivial fact explained to him half a dozen times before

he could grasp its significance, and he was always ready to help with cool and clear advice. He fully recognized the difficulty Tucker and I suffered from in having no clerical assistance apart from kindly volunteers like Moon, and he repeatedly urged the necessity for sending typists and stenographers. None came, however. All this time, after heavy days of interviews and discussions, of examinations of and instructions to agents, Tucker and I were up nearly every night till five in the morning, trying to get some of the results of our work down on paper.

## THE SUNBEAM AND THE FORD

The next excitement after the mysterious sailor was a portentous message conveyed to me from Erskine that an individual called Glitsas wished to meet me at 9.30 p.m. by the statue opposite the Russian Church in order to take me to a house at Pasha Liman near the Piræus where I should receive information from Egypt of priceless importance. Tucker at once made up his mind that this was a plot by the Germans to kidnap me. My own opinion was that it was a piece of bluff put up by a certain Cosmatos who had been dismissed from the Egyptian police. He had already tried to get into touch with us, but had been snubbed when we obtained from Alexandria a record of his career, sent with such surprising promptitude that I guessed he must have stung them for a tidy sum already.

I was to meet Glitsas on February 12th, and that evening about seven o'clock two stars of such astonishing brightness appeared in the sky above the Legation that a large crowd gathered in the Square under the impression they were Zeppelins. I can offer no explanation of this phenomenon, but presumably there is one. They were certainly the brightest stars I have ever seen, and they were certainly not Zeppelins. We watched them for an hour or more till they set into the haze

over the city. The appearance of these ominous stars confirmed Tucker in the belief that I was to be eliminated that night from this world, and he begged me with a tear in each blue eye to allow him to take precautions for my safety. Finally I agreed that, when I drove off in the Sunbeam to meet Glitsas by the statue, the Ford car driven by Robertson, with Tucker, Bonaparte, Moon, and a tough brigand called Bouchlis, should follow the Sunbeam driven by Markham. Glitsas turned up punctually, and all went well until he directed Markham to take a sharp turn to the right, and immediately afterwards pulled him up for going wrong. The Ford, which was following behind, in swerving to avoid us nearly went over a low cliff into the sea; but by good driving on the part of Robertson it was diverted into a back garden instead. Anxious not to alarm Glitsas with the idea that he was being followed, I stupidly told Markham to drive on without waiting to see whether the people in the Ford had noted our direction, and ten minutes later when we pulled up by a cinema theatre the Ford was nowhere in sight. By the cinema Glitsas suggested that we should get out of the car and walk the rest of the way to the house of the mysterious unknown. I whispered hurriedly to Markham under my breath that he was to follow discreetly with the Sunbeam, note what house I went into, and instruct the others, when they turned up, that if I was not out again by eleven o'clock to break in.

The intermediary walked along for some five minutes until we reached a row of respectable-looking houses, at one of which in the middle of the row he sounded four single knocks. I dallied for a moment, tying up a bootlace, in order to give Markham an opportunity to see which house I had entered; but there was no sign of him or the Sunbeam anywhere, and I could not wait too long without arousing suspicion. So when the front door closed behind me my whereabouts were unknown.

I was shown into a well-furnished room crowded with palms and ferns and bowls of goldfish, the effect of which under the green shade of the incandescent gaslight was of being in a large tank of some aquarium. Presently, a slim personable man, quietly dressed but with excessively elaborate manners, came into the room and told the maid to bring in some brandy and chocolate biscuits. I pushed the glass he had poured out for me toward my host and took the other, so that if there had been any drugging he would be in a quandary. However, I soon came to the conclusion that he intended no harm, and invited him to get to business. The conversation was carried on in Italian, and after a great deal of palaver and bragging about the important positions he had held in Egypt he informed me that in ten days' time a complete plan of the Suez Canal defences was to be smuggled out of Alexandria and sold to the German Legation, but that if I would pay five thousand francs for it he would intercept this plan and put it in my hands. I had little doubt but that the business was the usual attempt at the confidence trick, a species of fraud which flourishes particularly in the soil of war. I told my hopeful impostor that I could decide nothing at once, but that I would see him again on Tuesday. This was Saturday night. At a quarter to eleven I left the house and walked back to find the Sunbeam, which with Markham at the wheel was standing just where I had left it.

"No sign of the Ford?" I asked.

"No, sir," said Markham. "No sign of it at all."

"Did you see where I went?"

"No, sir," he assured me, with a hint of reproach in his voice at the suggestion of unseemly inquisitiveness. Markham was still the discreet chauffeur of peace.

"Suppose they had come along in the Ford and asked where I went, what would you have done?"

The little man wrinkled his nose in perplexity.



"It would have been a bit awkward, wouldn't it, sir?" he agreed plaintively.

"Didn't you understand I told you to follow me?"

The little man now looked utterly bewildered.

"No, sir, I hadn't exactly understood that. But now you mention it I can see what you were meaning."

I sighed and got into the Sunbeam.

"Back to the Annexe," I told him.

When we reached the Annexe there was no sign of the Ford anywhere, so we drove back to the Piræus again. At last about one o'clock in the morning we met the Ford driving frantically about the streets there, and when it pulled up four white-faced people leapt out to ask where I had been. They had long ago made up their minds that I had been kidnapped, and had been demanding news of me at every suspected house they could think of in the Piræus.

"Anyway, all's well that ends well," I said. "We'll drive back now. Come along, Tucker, you get in with me, and I'll tell you about this fellow I've been talking to. I'm sure he's Cosmatos."

We had hardly driven a couple of hundred yards when there was a crash behind, and looking back we saw the Ford in a state of collapse. The axle-shaft had snapped. So we left the Ford in the Piræus; and the Sunbeam, a little complacently, drove back to Athens with seven passengers. The rest of the Ford's history is soon told. We sold it as it stood in the middle of the road for two thousand francs to a Greek who spent another thousand francs in trying to patch it together. He then sold it for seventeen hundred francs to an unfortunate countryman of his who had only had one ride in it before the axle-shaft broke again. In justice to the Ford I should add that before it came to Athens it had spent several months being driven all over Crete, in the whole of which island, according to Robertson,

there were only ten miles of anything that looked remotely like a road. As for Cosmatos who, as I guessed, the pretentious stranger turned out to be, he tried various ways of extracting money from us, including a proposal to found an *Ententophile* paper to be financed by the Legation; but he gradually drifted out of our ken, and was heard of in Greece no more.

#### THE SUBMARINE BASE

The pursuit of the mysterious sailor had made me turn a less sceptical ear to tales of possible submarine bases, and when in the third week of February a much-decayed German called Otto Görner arrived at the Annexe with information about a store of benzine hidden in a cave at Hagia Triti on the *Ægean* seaboard of the island of Euboea, I was sufficiently shaken by the circumstantial way in which he told his tale to consider the possibility of an expedition. For one thing the man was drunk, and the minuteness of the details he gave, which seemed beyond the invention of a drunken man, inclined us to fancy that he might be speaking the vinous truth. We asked him why he wished to betray his country in this cynical manner, and he told us that he had been so badly treated by the German Consular Agent at Chalcis that he desired revenge. His tale was that he had tramped on foot all the way from Larissa in order to reach Athens and find out if there was any possibility of being sent back to Germany in order to join the army. When he reached Chalcis he had eaten nothing for two days, and the Consular Agent there had kicked him out of the office without giving him so much as a piece of bread. He had then in his misery taken the wrong direction and wandered on across to the other side of Euboea, thinking all the while that he was on the road to Athens. In a remote hamlet near the sea coast he had been taken in by some fishermen and given hospitality. They had shown him the store of benzine in a cave, and he had promised

them that they should share in the reward. He then walked back across Euboea. On reaching Athens at last he had gone immediately to the British Legation with his news. I asked him where he had found the money to get so drunk. He replied that he had borrowed it from the landlady in the house where he was staying in anticipation of the reward he was going to receive.

I ascertained from Davy Jones that nobody in the least like Görner had been near the German Legation, and finally after consulting with Sells and with Hill of the Contraband Department I decided to ask him if he was willing to drive with us in a car directly to the place and show us where the benzine was. He declared that nothing would please him better, and he displayed so little embarrassment at the suggestion that I began to be convinced that this time there was really something in it.

Not wanting to risk the Sunbeam over the appalling roads we might have to negotiate, I proposed to Ricaud a joint expedition, the expenses of two cars to be shared between the French and ourselves. Ricaud agreed, and at midnight we set out. In one car were Ricaud, Laborde, one of his subalterns, Zanardi, and myself. In the other were Bonaparte, old Weir in charge of the commissariat, Bouchlis our tame brigand, Jehan Heurtel, the young naval ensign who was working with Ricaud, and Otto Görner. Just where the railway line crosses the Tatoi road one of our front tyres was punctured, and we were held up for about half an hour. Some miles farther on, when we were driving through thickly wooded country, a hare ran across the road in front of our car, whereupon Zanardi insisted that we might as well turn back at once since the expedition would now inevitably be a fiasco. When the back tyre was punctured immediately afterward, I suggested that probably this was the bad luck portended by the hare.

While the tyre was being mended I sat beside the road in the woodland gloom, gazing in something like ecstasy at a yellow

crocus which was illuminated by the lights of the car shining upon it. It was the first time I had seen a yellow crocus growing wild, and the solitary loveliness of it in that mossy glade among those gnarled trees burns like a candle in my memory.

After a while we emerged from the trees to find open country, the outlines of which were dimly visible under slightly less than half a watery moon. In the grey of dawn we had to drive for ten kilometres across rough fields before we reached Chalcis, where we crossed the bridge over the Euripus to Euboea. I did not sleep all the way until we left Chalcis among its billows of snow-white orchards. Then I dozed for a while and woke up nineteen kilometres out to see a sublime scarlet sunrise flaming over the Delph, a great bare pyramidal peak about six thousand feet high. I found that we were driving across a level plain bounded on the west by the waters of the Gulf of Atalante, on the east by a range of wooded hills, and scattered with almond trees in full rosy bloom. As it was now twenty minutes past six, old Weir suggested breakfast. These were the occasions on which Weir excelled himself, for he had been a courier all his life and knew exactly how to cater for an expedition like this. I can see him now, with his bright little pig's-eyes and drooping white moustache, unpacking the hampers of cold turkey and ham and hard-boiled eggs, which we washed down with great draughts of Hymettus wine. It was cold, for there was a shrewd east wind blowing down from the wooded mountains of Euboea ahead of us, and wherever we looked peasants were going to work with their bullocks, frieze after frieze of figures moving in silhouette against the flushed almond blossom under the pale blue sky of the morning. The plain seemed to stretch for miles in every direction, and as far as we could see these trains of labourers were moving slowly across the level ground.

Not far from where we were drinking our wine Zeus had snatched Ganymede to serve him as cupbearer on Olympus, and

in the northern sky hung a cloudlet incarnadined by the sunrise which might have been the ravished boy himself. After breakfast we drove for sixty-eight kilometres, through a mountainous country of densely wooded gorges, foothills bosky with myrtle and arbutus, and pine-dark mountains, over an unexpectedly good road, tawny in hue, until we descended into a wide valley watered by many streams and dotted with immense plane trees.

It was nine o'clock when we reached Hagia Triti, a cluster of cottages about a mile back from the sea with a stretch of flat marshy land between them and the beach. The sea coast here formed a shallow bay between two headlands about a mile and a half apart, and eastward along the horizon loomed the smoky island shapes of Skiathos and Skopelos.

I looked to see if Görner was showing any signs of anxiety, but he showed none at all. He was already plunging ahead along the beach in the direction of the southern headland to right of us, in which he assured us would be found the cave with the benzine. When we reached this headland, after labouring heavily through a long stretch of loose sand, we found that there was no chance of getting near it except in a boat. Yet Görner had told us that the cave could be reached by land, and I now began to feel sure that it was a Barmecide base. I warned our guide that if we procured a boat only to find there was nothing in the cave I should drop him overboard and leave him to drown. I told him that if he had been lying he had better confess now. He was not in the least taken aback by these threats, but begged earnestly for a boat to be fetched at once, declaring that he was quite ready to be drowned if he was not speaking the truth. I sent Weir back to the village to bargain for a boat, and the rest of us clambered up the cliff, which was covered with bushes of myrtle and carpeted with myriads of mauve crocuses. When we reached the top we could scramble down to a small cove on the other side.

Then Görner said that he had made a mistake, and that the cave was not in this headland, but in the one beyond. Sure enough we could now distinguish the black entrance farther out. Presently old Weir came round the corner with a boat, and we all jumped aboard. When we reached the entrance to the cave indicated by Görner we found that the boat could hardly be got inside, and I became more doubtful than ever of his veracity. He remained calm, however, and declared that there had been no water in the cave seven days ago when he was there. After we had worked the boat in for about ten yards we found that there was a curved plank fixed across, which prevented the boat's being grounded at the far end. This our French companions decided was very suspicious, though it looked to me no more than a freak of the waves. Nothing we could do would move the plank ; so finding that the water was not deep Heurtel took off his shoes and stockings and waded across into the dimness of the cave's end, whence he shouted back to us that there was nothing at all to be seen. I pushed Görner overboard and told him to go and point out the whereabouts of the promised casks. Ricaud, who hated to admit defeat, smelt the damp sides of the cave and declared there was a distinct perfume of benzine noticeable; but I could smell nothing except the ordinary marine smells. I called Heurtel to get on board again, and warned the German that we were going to leave him behind in the cave until he had found the casks. He was stolidly patient under these threats, and said that if one of us would help him he would dig for the rest of the morning. I told Bonaparte to land and do some digging in order to get his fat down.

We pulled out with the boat and found farther along the headland a natural archway through which we rowed into another small cove where among the large round grey pebbles of the beach were growing clumps of what at first I thought

were pink primulas, but which turned out to be a cruciferous plant of tufted habit, some kind of stock probably. On this pebbly beach was a pool, the sides of which were covered with grey sea-anemones and black sea-urchins. The effect of this small cove with its scheme of black and grey and pink was beautiful and unusual. We basked here for an hour in the benign sunlight of the morning. Then we rowed back to the cave, to find that all the digging done by Bonaparte and Görner had not revealed so much as an empty benzine tin. Görner still stuck to his story that there had been casks here seven days ago; but, angry though I felt at the waste of time and money, I had not the heart to abandon the wretched German there, and so there was nothing for it but to drive him back to Athens.

The car in which I had travelled last night had been showing signs of uncertainty all the way. For the return journey the three Frenchmen and myself went ahead in the other car, driven at a swift pace beside tremendous precipices and through magnificent gorges by what the driver declared was a better road back. When we had driven a few miles we discovered we had left all the provisions in the other car. As by now we were feeling enthusiastically that lunch would be welcome, we stopped at the squalid little town of Mantoudi, and tried to get some food; but we could get nothing except coffee and twelve pieces of Turkish-delight. Other villages through which we passed were less hospitable still. The inhabitants seemed never to have seen a car before, and when we appeared they picked up stones to throw at us, evidently fancying that the car was a dangerous monster. The filth and mud of those villages was disgusting. In every one of them there seemed to be as many scrawny tortoiseshell pigs as there were pale farouche peasants and screaming, half-naked children.

We finally reached Athens about six o'clock, all of us worn out by the jolting we had received and all of us longing for some-

thing more substantial than Turkish-delight. The other car broke down repeatedly all the way back and did not arrive until half-past two in the morning.

Otto Görner's behaviour was never satisfactorily explained. My own theory was that when he had been turned away from the Consulate without food or shelter he became lightheaded with starvation and thought to himself what a fine revenge it would be if he could denounce a submarine base to the British. Then gradually as he tramped wearily on he had become possessed of the notion that he really had seen a submarine base, and that he would be granted his revenge. There was no evidence of any kind that he was acting maliciously. What happened to the poor devil afterwards I have no idea, perhaps an obscure death in a corner of that wide-spreading misery of war.

#### POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES

The political situation in Athens and the military situation in Salonica remained more or less static during February. Mr. Venizelos continued to live in retirement. There was no sign either from the Foreign Office or from the Quai d'Orsay that the British and French Governments had succeeded in discovering what they wanted to do in Greece. It is true that the French in Athens were unanimous in advocating open support of Mr. Venizelos; but it was generally believed that so long as M. Briand remained in power it would be difficult to obtain that open support. The reason given for this was that Briand was too much under the personal influence of Princess George of Greece. The British Government was certainly afraid of any action that might seem even remotely anti-dynastic, in which attitude they were cordially supported by the Russian Government. The Italians did everything possible to thwart the progress of Venizelist ideas, being obsessed with the fear of a strong Greece, and already having ambitions in Northern



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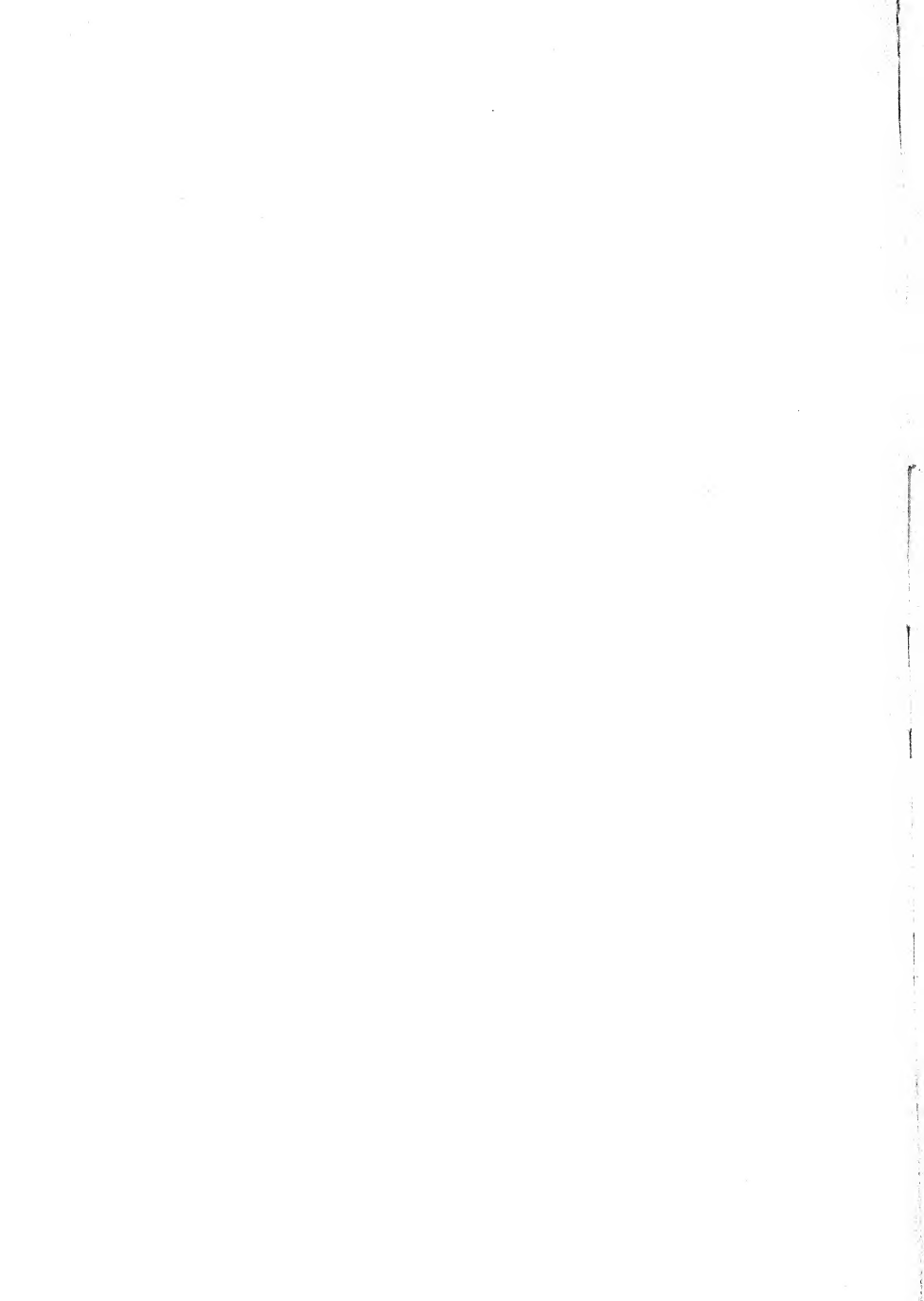
Epirus. The Salonica operations were regarded with dislike by the British Military authorities both at home and in France, and the loyalty of Lieut.-General Sir Bryan Mahon and Admiral de Robeck to General Sarraill was presently to lead to their recall.

In view of the attitude at home toward the Salonica expedition, it is difficult to understand why Sir Francis Elliot was not recalled from Athens at this date, because Sir Francis was thoroughly tainted with Venizelism. It is difficult to understand why Admiral Mark Kerr, in whom King Constantine had the greatest trust, should not have been allowed to remain in command of the British Naval Mission. It is difficult to understand why Lieut.-Colonel Sir Thomas Montgomery-Cuninghame, who disbelieved in the ability of Venizelos any longer to sway his countrymen, who hated the French, and who admired King Constantine, should not have been left in Athens as Military Attaché. It looked as if the policy of the Foreign Office was to encourage Venizelos in every way sentimentally while withholding all practical support. It was indeed the good old English system of trying to eat one's cake and have it.

The effect of such inconsistency on the Royalists was lamentable, for they made up their minds that the Allies were only deterred by fear from dethroning King Constantine and using Venizelos to drag Greece into the War. The maintenance in Athens of a Minister whom they considered hostile seemed evidence to the Royalists of our sinister intentions, and the patience with which we put up with the malicious obstructiveness of the Greek General Staff seemed equally strong evidence of our feebleness. The Royalists could not understand why we did not demand demobilization, and in retrospect it is a puzzle to grasp why the expedition to Salonica was not given up and Greece left to her own devices. Probably the reason why the French hung on was their nervousness over Syria. Salonica was



A signed portrait of Eleutherios Venizelos, sent to me from  
Salonica to replace the one literally chewed up in my house  
by the mob



the expression of their ambitions in the Near East. They did not like the idea of releasing British forces for an offensive against the Turks by way of Palestine, and in addition to what they imagined was the threat to Syria by British greed they were beginning to be afraid of what the Italians might not covet in Asia Minor.

There is no doubt whatever that, if Venizelos could have obtained something more than sympathetic admiration from Downing Street, he would have moved many weeks before he did. However, any speculation is a mere waste of time, because it is impossible to construct a theory from such a hand-to-mouth statesmanship as the British Government displayed throughout 1916, a hand-to-mouth statesmanship which found its complement in the hand-to-mouth strategy of the Fighting Forces.

Cuninghame's place as Military Attaché was taken by Colonel W. E. Fairholme, who was at the time of his appointment Chief Liaison Officer with the British Salonica Force. Fairholme's mother had been a Baroness Poellnitz-Frankenberg of Bavaria. She had been one of three beautiful and romantic sisters, all of whom had married Scotsmen and one of whom was the mother of Norman Douglas. Fairholme was a large heavy-jowled pompous Gunner, and, though his experience of the Artillery had been dormant for many years he had had a good deal of experience in the Near East as Military Commissioner on various frontier rectifications. He had helped to reorganize the gendarmerie in Macedonia in 1904. He had been Military Attaché in Vienna, and afterwards in Paris and Madrid. When war broke out he was Military Attaché in Brussels. During the retreat before the German advance he was unfortunate to leave behind him in an hotel the papers which proved that British, French, and Belgian officers had some time before war broke out discussed the military measures to be taken if the Germans violated Belgian neutrality. These documents were published

by the Germans in the first fortnight of the War and made an unfortunate impression in neutral countries, although thanks to the censorship nothing was heard of this *gaffe* in Great Britain or France. Apparently Fairholme had always blamed one of C's men for the loss of these papers, and the mere mention of C's organization was enough to suffuse his rubicund face with a mulberry stain of wrath. It was perhaps fortunate that I was at this date a black sheep in the C organization, for that made 'Fairy,' as we called him, more gracious to me than he might otherwise have been. He disliked the French as much as Cuninghame disliked them, and he was indeed a perfect specimen of the conventional Teuton. Just before war broke out Fairholme had attended the great French review in Paris, when he had been provided for the grand occasion with a wall-eyed horse. In the film that was taken of the review the wall-eyed horse with Fairholme on its back was unluckily chosen for a close-up, and its appearance on the screen was always a signal for cries of mirth from the audience. Fairholme's Germanic mind without humour persuaded him that the French had deliberately chosen that wall-eyed horse because he was half a German and that having given it to him they had deliberately made the close-up in order to bring him into public ridicule. I cannot remember seeing Fairholme smile, and for a man to be unable to smile at least once during the events of 1916 in Athens argues a resistance to humour of outstanding obstinacy. Sir Francis Elliot has always accused me of an incapacity to be just to Colonel Fairholme, but I have never been able to obtain from him a revelation of the hidden charms and concealed ability to which I remained blind at the time, and to which in retrospect I am still blind. Yet I must not give an impression that he and I were at daggers drawn from the start. On the contrary, for a long time there was harmony between us, and in his solemn fruity voice he would often indicate a mild approval of my work.

Indeed he once went so far as to say that he should warmly recommend me for a C.M.G., though I should add that this was just after I had told him that I saw no prospect of the War's coming to an end before 1920.

There were other changes, too, in the personnel of the Legation about this time. Goodhart had been sent to Buenos Ayres. Hicks-Beach went home on sick leave. Garnett also was back at the Foreign Office. These gaps in the staff led to Wace's services being required for the Chancery, and the work of the Passport inquiries and recommendations for visas now fell entirely upon Tucker. Sells ultimately acquired an Assistant Naval Attaché in the shape of Assistant-Paymaster Page, R.N.V.R., a hearty and genial fellow. Such an acquisition by Sells upset Fairholme a good deal, and he sent some strong letters and telegrams to the War Office urging the vital importance of an Assistant Military Attaché for himself. His request was preposterous, because there was not enough work to justify an aide. The whole of Fairholme's duties could be performed in a couple of hours during the morning.

The most important addition to the Legation Staff was R. E. D. Bridgeman, who in February was transferred to Athens from the Embassy at Paris as Second Secretary. Bridgeman joined Erskine, Wace, and myself in our daily lunch up at the house of the Director of the British School, which gave me a chance of getting to know him fairly well. Yet even as I write that I feel it is absurd to claim as much about a man who ultimately surprised so completely most of his friends and acquaintances. At this date, when he was thirty-two, he was as handsome and distinguished a figure as one could meet. To be sure, the average Englishman might have criticized him for an excessive dandyism; but nobody could have denied that he suc-

cessfully carried off an external appearance which might have belonged to the days of the Regency. He was tall with clear-cut features and wavy hair. He sported short whiskers of the toreador type and trousers even wider than the notorious Oxford bags of 1921. Actually, of course, those so-called Oxford bags did not originate in Oxford at all, but in France. Bridgeman's manner and speech were the quintessence of exquisite diplomacy. He had been private secretary to Lord Bertie, and his masterly control of Chancery routine must have been a joy to Sir Francis Elliot, who had found some of Bridgeman's predecessors disturbing to his orderly mind. It is impossible to associate Bridgeman with the most trivial mistake of diplomatic demeanour or phraseology or procedure while he remained in Athens. Ultimately he went on to Teheran. Of what exactly happened there to change his point of view and make him wish to retire from diplomacy I have no exact details; but I have always understood that it was some disagreement with Lord Curzon when Lord Curzon was Foreign Secretary. Anyway, Bridgeman after resigning from the Service first of all went over to the Labour Party and contested the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex as a Labour Candidate. Finding presumably that even the Labour Party was not capable of expressing his political theories, he turned Communist and contested the Election of 1931 as a Workers' candidate. I have his Election address before me as I write, and since I find it impossible to believe in such a complete transmutation of personality, I fancy that in writing of having had an opportunity to get to know him fairly well I must have been guilty of a ridiculous piece of presumption.

At the end of February Sells and Hill left Athens for the Naval Conference at Malta, and with expenses rising daily I prayed that they would come back with good news of more money and clerical help. Now that Tucker had the whole burden of the passports on his shoulders, it was more than he

could manage to do all the typing I required, and trusting to providence for the necessary funds I engaged Miss Wanda Georgevicz, a refugee from Smyrna and a most intelligent young woman, to act temporarily as my private secretary.

On the morning of the day that Sells and Hill left on a French mine-sweeper I went up to the French School and had a long talk with de Roquefeuil about the future in Greece. He, confident in the support of Admiral Lacaze, the Minister of Marine, was sure that all would go well, and that steps would shortly be taken to clear up the present muddle and uncertainty. I was feeling a little envious of the lavishness with which the French Intelligence Service had been equipped. It was plain that, however hard the Foreign Office might apply the brake to the policy of the Quai d'Orsay, the lead in Greece would inevitably fall to the nation which best equipped the promotion of its policy. There was no doubt that for as long as possible Mr. Venizelos would refuse to be exploited by the French. Yet, with the Royalists growing more and more aggressive every day in the face of the apparent apathy of the British, Venizelos was likely to be driven into the arms of the French to save himself and his supporters from destruction. I left de Roquefeuil in a mood of depression. I had to face the probability of our receiving nothing like what I had asked for in the way of financial support, and I was at my wit's end how to maintain our influence and escape being dragged along at the tail of the French *Service de Renseignements*. To be sure, opinion in Athens generally credited myself with the manipulation of the bogey they called the 'Anglo-French Secret Police'; but even that might become an embarrassment if the French were really to get going.

The night that Sells and Hill went off to Malta was the first night of Carnival. I thought it would be a favourable occasion to see how our agents conducted themselves. So I gave each man a particular job that night, either to watch some house or



follow some individual. Then putting on a black mask and a black silk domino I wandered about all night like the Caliph in the *Arabian Nights*, unrecognized. There had been a rumour that the Government would try to check the diversions of Carnival that year in case the Venizelists should seize the opportunity of the jollification to start a revolution; but beyond doubling their patrols of slatternly soldiers nothing was done, and Athens gave itself up to revelry.

It was an exquisite evening, with the moon nearly full, hanging over the city in a cloudless sky; and since by a sensible economy the streets were not lighted when the moon was so generous, the effect of the masked crowds in dominoes of rose and orange, of amber, blue, and scarlet, was entrancing. The Mediterranean people do not get drunk on such occasions, nor do they march about arm in arm with squeakers and teasers like romping Britons. The rowdiest prank was for six masks to drive up and down Stadium Street in a carriage, singing popular songs to the accompaniment of guitars.

I had the satisfaction of observing that all our agents were sticking to their jobs. So I hailed a carriage and drove about for a couple of hours in the moonlight, forgetting the Malta Conference, forgetting the lack of stenographers, forgetting the problem of the February accounts, forgetting the threat of French supremacy, forgetting the amount of extra writing I should have to do to-morrow in return for such idleness, and surrendering myself to the luxury of perfect anonymity in tune with the movement and the laughter and the guitars of that masked and moonlit throng.

## CHAPTER III: MARCH

### NO ACTION

SELLS'S account of the Naval Conference at Malta augured ill for the serene future of the Intelligence Department of the British Legation. C had evidently conceived an irremovable prejudice against myself, and any attempt by the Naval Attaché to present in a more favourable light my behaviour over that unlucky report had been unsuccessful. He had continually demanded of Sells what I was trying to get out of it. Nothing that Sells could say availed to shake his conviction that every word and every action of mine were prompted entirely by personal ambition. Even the Naval Attaché's suggestion that the responsible position I occupied merited at least the rank of Captain was treated by C with scorn.

"He's an extraordinary old bird," Sells told me. "Obstinate as a mule, with a chin like the cut-water of a battleship."

Somebody had told Sells the story of how C had lost his leg. In the autumn of 1914 his son, a subaltern in the Seaforths, had been driving him in a fast car on some urgent Intelligence mission in the area of operations. The car, going at full speed, had crashed into a tree and overturned, pinning C by the leg and flinging his son out on his head. The boy was fatally injured, and his father, hearing him moan something about the cold, tried to extricate himself from the wreck of the car to put a coat over him; but struggle as he might he could not free his smashed leg. Thereupon he had taken out a penknife and hacked away at his smashed leg until he had cut it off, after which he had crawled

over to his son and spread a coat over him, being found later lying unconscious by the dead body.

"That's the sort of old chap C is," said Sells.

I agreed with Sells that such a man would not easily be convinced that he was in the wrong. I inquired after V.

"Just the same as ever, old boy. Couldn't be nicer, of course; but absolutely incapable of making up his mind, and frightened to death of C. De Roquefeuil threw his weight about a bit, and Dartige du Fournet, the French Admiral, turned a very glassy eye on him once or twice."

"Well, they'll damn well have to settle something soon, because by the end of this month we shall have spent all the money we have and the whole of the April money as well," I announced.

Depression about the future, coupled with overwork, brought on an extra bad attack of sciatic neuralgia, which put me in bed for five days of devilish agony. Pain is a great clarifier of the mind, and I began to feel more positive than ever that large schemes lay behind de Roquefeuil's advent in Athens, and that the setting up of such a large and expensive organization portended much more than a mere effort to counteract Schenck's propaganda or serve as a basis of Intelligence for the benefit of the Armée d'Orient. The political implications of de Roquefeuil's advent were made perfectly clear to Sir Francis Elliot by myself, and they were made equally clear to the Foreign Office by Sir Francis Elliot. Unfortunately, the intention of the French to establish a political and commercial supremacy over Greece even if the achievement of it should involve an occupation, which was certainly definitely contemplated by the middle of March, was not taken seriously by the British Government. If it was, nothing was done to check the carrying out of that intention except an occasional application of the brake. The difficulty of persuading the military advisers of the Government

that imaginative statecraft was as important as sound strategy may be granted; but since there was no evidence of any imagination in the conduct of British foreign policy at this date we cannot blame the military mandarins for regarding the military position as independent of every other consideration. No attempt was made, apparently, to discover why the French attached so much importance to Salonica, and the Foreign Office concerned itself at all seriously with affairs in Greece only when dynastic security seemed to be threatened.

When General Sarrail proposed to advance on the Macedonian front an *aide mémoire* was sent through the French Minister in Athens, to remind him that British forces had only been dispatched to Salonica on the strict understanding that they were never to advance. Sarrail, being deterred from any military operations of importance, occupied his energy with politics, and in doing so he created an impression that it was his own personal ambition which was responsible for everything the French did in Greece. As a member of the Financial Democratic Party he was accused of engineering a scheme for the French Jews to make money; as an individual he was accused of allowing his personal dislike of King Constantine to inspire his actions with petty spite; as a Frenchman he was accused of meditating a military *coup d'état* in France on the lines of Boulanger. It was assumed that, if Sarrail could be got rid of, the whole situation could be satisfactorily cleared up. I always had my suspicions of that facile theory which attributed to Sarrail the dictation of French policy, and I never believed that if Sarrail were removed the policy would change. Yet as early as this it was only possible to indicate suspicions of France's policy in Greece without being able to offer satisfactory proof. And as in Salonica the military authorities were obsessed by the dominating figure of Sarrail, so equally in Athens the diplomatic representatives of Great Britain, Russia, and Italy lost sight of

## GREEK MEMORIES

the real inspiration behind French action in their obsession by the notion that the personal ambition and eccentricity of de Roquefeuil were the controlling factors. All the power that de Roquefeuil ultimately acquired and exerted was bestowed upon him by the supine attitude of the British Government. Nobody was more unwilling than Mr. Venizelos to carry through his policy by climbing on the shoulders of the French. At this date he was remaining completely inactive and waiting on a turn of events which would compel the British Government to act positively and firmly. King Constantine, the Skouloudis Cabinet, and the Greek General Staff, who were all of them convinced that the personal ambition of Venizelos was a menace to their future, played into the hands of the French by obstruction in Salonica and aggressiveness in the rest of Greece. They pinned their hopes to the ability of the Germans to drive the Salonica forces into the sea, in which happy event they planned to align themselves openly with the Central Powers. With Venizelos hoping that Great Britain would do something, with his opponents hoping that Germany would do something, with Great Britain hoping that Venizelos and his opponents would do nothing, the French decided upon action.

## FAIRY TALES

The affair of Calimassiotis, which was the next problem we had to face, may have been the first attempt by the French to provide facts on which to base an ultimatum to the Greek Government; but I am more inclined to believe that it was a commonplace swindle which took them in. Calimassiotis was a Greek deputy, suspected of Germanophile tendencies and engaged in commerce at the Piræus. According to Ricaud, one of the clerks in the deputy's office had offered to steal for him the letter-book in which copies of every letter sent out were entered. This book could only be removed for a short time

as an opportunity presented itself, so that it had taken over a week before every page had been successfully photographed.

When I read through the correspondence thus brought to light it seemed to provide irrefutable evidence that for a long while Calimassiotis had been supplying German and Austrian submarines with petrol in bulk and various stores, together with information about the movements of Allied ships. There must have been three or four hundred letters in all, and superficially the case was complete. Yet my immediate reaction was doubt, because the whole thing looked too good to be true. I asked Ricaud if he was convinced that an elaborate forgery had not been engineered, and he assured me that such a forgery would have been out of the question. When I expressed regret at not having seen the book itself, Ricaud said, sooner than that I should remain unconvinced, he would risk having it removed once more from the office. This was done, and I had to admit that the book certainly did look genuine. Yet I was still suspicious, because Ricaud would not agree to my examining the alleged faithless clerk nor even tell me his name. I took over a copy of the correspondence to Hill at the Commercial Department, and left it with him for twenty-four hours in order that he might analyse it carefully. At the end of his examination he told me he was not satisfied of the genuineness of the correspondence.

Among the letters, some of which were in French and some in Greek, were a few addressed to people in Crete, where we had Intelligence officers working under the orders of the Navy with funds from C, and where we might hope to check the revelations. No information thence was forthcoming, and after Hill's criticism of the correspondence I did not feel justified in advising Sir Francis Elliot to use it in official diplomacy as an example of supplying enemy submarines. The French, however, went all out on it, and it was even published in the Press as evidence of Greek activity in the enemy's interest.

Four or five months later one of our Intelligence officers in Crete telegraphed that he had identified some of the people in Crete inculpated by the correspondence and asked for photographic copies of it to be sent to him. I was naturally anxious to atone now for my earlier scepticism by doing all I could to secure recognition of the genuineness of the French coup. Ultimately, however, the Cretan individuals inculpated were proved innocent, and the Calimassiotis correspondence was established to be an elaborate forgery from beginning to end.

The whole story is told in a book called *Tales of Ægean Intrigue* written by J. C. Lawson, a don of Pembroke College, Cambridge, who was Intelligence officer at Suda Bay under the orders of the S.N.O. and financed through the Commercial Department. I met J. C. Lawson only once, when he struck me as priggish and consequential, a first impression which a perusal of his book did nothing to dispel. Still, he could use his wits, and his exposure of the Calimassiotis forgery was a most creditable piece of work. Indeed, his book, so long as it is concerned with Lawson's personal activities, is fairly accurate; but he knew nothing of conditions outside his own rather small area, and his assumption of omniscience is often ludicrous.

About the same time as the French were exploiting the Calimassiotis correspondence, we were able to prove that the German Legation was in direct communication with Captain Chryssospathi, the head of the Palace police. It was Davy Jones who provided us with this valuable evidence. One night, at the end of a long account of what had been going on at the German Legation for the past two days, he produced from a dirty handkerchief a number of minute pieces of paper, having had the opportunity for the first time since he was in my employment to secure the contents of Count von Mirbach's wastepaper-basket. These fragments were finally put together by Hasluck after two days' incessant work which might have defeated the

champion solver of jigsaw puzzles. The letter was written in pencil by the German Minister to Captain Chryssospathi, thanking him for all that he had done to help and for his assurances that he would do his best to remove anybody who made himself obnoxious to the German Legation. The chief difficulty in putting together the letter had been the continual erasures and corrections, showing that the German Minister had taken a great deal of trouble over its composition. In the end he seemed to have thought better of sending the letter, and from what I could gather of a snatch of conversation between him and Grancy overheard by Davy Jones, he had sent his Marine Attaché to communicate his thanks and request by word of mouth.

The letter was of course useless as a proof of communication between the German Legation and the Palace police, because it was never actually sent; but the support it gave to our conviction of their close co-operation was morally invaluable.

Soon after this I was instructed to prepare a report on the behaviour of the Palace police during the last two months, and I was able to produce an inexcusable set of outrages both on accredited agents of ours and on suspected sympathizers. This report was used by the French as the basis of a strong demand to the Greek Government for assurances to be given within twenty-four hours that the Palace police would cease to molest us or our agents. The Greek Government tried to get out of the mess by letting Chryssospathi resign; but the King stepped in and vetoed this. Finally about forty-five Greek secret agents were sent back to the colours. Yet no sooner was this done than a French agent at the Piræus, who was a Cypriote and therefore a British subject, was beaten up so badly that he had to be taken into the Russian hospital. This gave Sir Francis Elliot an opportunity to send a strong telegram to the Foreign Office, in which he went so far as to urge a demand for the



resignation of the Prime Minister, Mr. Skouloudis, who was probably the most exasperating octogenarian in Europe.

As a counter-blast to protests by the British and French Ministers against the behaviour of Captain Chryssospathi and the Palace police, the *Acropolis*, a third-rate newspaper, in the middle of the month came out with the following sensational story:

“ ASSASSINATION OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH  
SECRET POLICE

“The secret police of Mr. Mackenzie have established in several parts of the city sub-agencies for the facilitation of their work. For instance, the offices at 62 Asclepios Street near Lycabettos were lately directed by an anarchist, Joseph Branchilion, a British subject of Italian origin. The day before yesterday Branchilion after having spent his last franc went toward midnight in a state of drunkenness to the Pension Merlin where Mr. Mackenzie lives to demand money from him. As Mr. Mackenzie would not receive him, Branchilion insulted him with much indecency. Next day Mr. Mackenzie dismissed Branchilion from his service in spite of the latter's prayers to remain in it. Branchilion before leaving Mr. Mackenzie's office insulted him again, and threatened to put his eye out.

“Branchilion after his dismissal at once entered the service of the Germans and divulged to them all the mysteries of the Anglo-French Secret Police. He even succeeded in persuading his compatriot, Salvo Copala, Mr. Mackenzie's private secretary, to steal some valuable documents and hand them over to him. Finally, Copala was discovered stealing these documents and, having been tortured, confessed his guilt. Immediately after his confession Copala was assassinated on the night of February 18th in the Annexe of the British Legation, and it was decided at the same time that Branchilion should be removed at the first favourable opportunity. Mr. Tucker, who knew Branchilion's love of money, sought him out in the Pantheon Restaurant and persuaded him to re-enter the British

## MARCH

Service, promising him twice as much as he had been paid by the Germans. Branchilion, tempted by this high salary, agreed to re-enter the British Service where he was entrusted with several minor jobs to give him confidence. Finally, the day before yesterday, Mr. Salo invited him to his office and suggested paying him the sum of 100,000 francs if he would undertake to carry various official documents from the Piræus to Alexandria. Branchilion at once agreed to set out at the first opportunity. On the voyage the boat was stopped by a French warship, and Branchilion was arrested. One story says that Branchilion after having shot a French Naval Lieutenant committed suicide; but according to our information he was taken in chains to Malta and has there been condemned to death."

It is regrettable that this sidelight on my ruthlessness was not available for Sir Basil Thomson, Mr. Abbott, and other historians who have pretended to chronicle events in Greece during 1916.

In another part of the same issue of the *Acropolis* a satirical poem was addressed to me of which I print a literal translation:

### YOU HAVE OVERDONE IT, MR. MACKENZIE

This man what has he got against the Greeks,  
That with vile actions and words,  
He upsets our stomachs  
Which are full of Lenten fare ?  
Why the devil did they send him to our city ?  
To this city which is full of traps  
Now that two anti-rabies hospitals have been established,  
And the street-dog-gatherer is suffering from want of work ?

No sooner had the preposterous story of the assassination been officially contradicted by the British Legation than the *Embros*, which was considered a much more respectable paper than the *Acropolis*, printed the following tale:

"A mysterious incident which has caused great emotion in high circles occurred at dawn the other day at the Piræus. Shortly after midnight one of the watchmen of the port, Stylianos Nikas, saw a grey motor-car without lights stop on the quay opposite the anchorage of the French steamship *Ernest Simon*. Four men alighted from the automobile, each carrying a heavy box. These unknown arrivals called up the boatman Lambrikis, who happened to be rowing by, and hired him to row them off to the steamer with the boxes. The boatman offered to carry on board another box which had been left on the quay, but he was sharply reprimanded, after which two of the mysterious men entered the motor-car again and drove off.

"At two o'clock in the morning the car appeared again, still without lights. The chauffeur got out, called up Lambikis [*sic*], and told him to row off to the steamer and fetch the two men who remained on board. When Lembratis [*sic*] reached the ladder of the *Ernest Simon* he noticed a small cutter in which were the two men he had been sent to fetch from the *Ernest Simon*, and with those two men was a third person, whose arms were tied behind him with a cord and whose face was swathed in a black silk handkerchief.

"Who could this be? The boatman's curiosity was intense, and he carefully watched the mysterious proceedings. He noticed that as soon as the prisoner was taken on board his hands were untied and that he walked up and down the deck with a sad air. He was a man of good social standing about thirty-five years old, short and plump and clean-shaven, of a distinctly German appearance.

"We learn that the witnesses of this mysterious incident have been summoned in turn before the Captain of the Port, the Assistant-Director of the Police and Captain Chryssospathi, the Chief of the Secret Police, by whom they were rigorously questioned."

The sequel to this absurd tale may be found in a dispatch from Sir Edward Grey to Sir Francis Elliot:

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Foreign Office,

March 24th, 1916.

Sir:

*The Greek Minister spoke to me of the charges made by the French against what are called the secret police of Baron Schenck.*

*The Greek Government did not know of this secret police, but they complained of the secret police of the Allies. People of worthless character were employed who, to make their services appreciated, brought groundless charges and caused much trouble. In the case of the treatment of a Cypriot by the Greek police, of which you have complained, the Greek Government were ordering a strict inquiry. Meanwhile, the secret police of the Allies had seized one person, handcuffed him, and put him on board a French ship.*

*I said that I knew nothing about any secret police of the Allies and could say nothing on this subject. I had heard from you about the treatment of the Cypriote. He had, if I remember rightly, been thrashed three times by the Greek police after an arrest without trial. It seemed to be a very bad case, and I had authorized you to put forward a claim.*

*I am, with great truth and regard,*

*Sir,*

*Your most obedient Servant*

*Edward Grey*

The Minister told me to send him a letter which he could forward to the Foreign Office, and this was what I wrote:

Intelligence Department,  
British Legation,  
Athens.

April 18th, 1916.

Sir:

*With reference to Dispatch No. 27 from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs which you have shown to me, I have the honour*

to inform you that I have spoken to my French colleague who assures me that he has never referred to the 'secret police of Baron Schenck.' Both he and I have had occasion to refer several times to the secret police of the Palace, and perhaps the confusion between them which seems to exist in the mind of the Greek Minister in London is not unnatural.

I believe I am right in saying that M. Skouloudis once informed you that he had no knowledge of the existence of the Palace police; this, as you will see, coincides with the statement of the Greek Minister about the secret police of Baron Schenck.

With regard to the secret police of the Allies, I am at a loss to understand what exactly the Greek Minister means. It seems almost trifling to waste your time in contradicting the existence of a secret police, since it is obvious that the principles of neutrality to which His Majesty's Government has always adhered would not allow the Allies to create in a neutral capital such an anomalous body.

With regard to the employment of people of worthless character, I venture to think that you might request a particular instance from the list of persons employed at the British Legation, which has been handed to the Greek Government and which has not hitherto been subjected to any scrutiny in the interests of the public of Greece.

I notice that the Greek Minister is not merely content with general statements, but that he even goes so far as to level a particular accusation. Probably he refers to the case of a Serbian who expressed to the Serbian Minister in Athens a desire to rejoin his regiment at Corfu. In order that he might do this quickly, he was sent by one of the steamers of the Messagerie Line to Salonica, whence with several other Serbians he returned to Corfu. The grotesque elaborations of this simple fact in the Greek Press have not until now been considered worthy of contradiction; but since

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*the Greek Minister has formally complained you may perhaps care to have the facts of the case.*

*I have the honour to be,*

*Sir,*

*Your most obedient Servant,*

*Compton Mackenzie*

While we were putting forward our case for strong action to be taken against the Palace police, a fantastic half-pay Danish sea-captain turned up in Athens with credentials from Alexandria. I was instructed to give him every facility to look round and also to let him send telegrams in our cipher under the name of Brutus. His real name was Christmas! He actually secured an audience of the King and immediately afterwards telegraphed to London a ridiculous account of the situation in Athens, which I, who was not allowed to communicate directly with London, could only counter by a telegram of protest to Alexandria. On top of this he discovered all by himself a supposed submarine base at Laurium, and once again this wretched nonsense was disseminated in telegrams. Finally Sir Francis protested against this irresponsible old man of the sea's sojourn any longer in Athens at the expense of the British Government, and he wandered off again. To look back after twenty-three years at Captain Christmas is to make me as sceptical of his real existence as of the existence of Santa Claus. Indeed, if I did not possess references to him in letters I should fancy that I had read about him in Hans Andersen's fairy tales.

## THE STOLEN PLANS

On the same night that Davy Jones brought me the contents of the German Minister's wastepaper-basket he mentioned that on the previous day a man had called at half-past two at the German Legation and sent in his name to Falkenhausen as

M. Nochos. While he was waiting in the hall Falkenhausen had come out of his room in a rage and asked him what he meant by coming to the Legation in the day-time. He had then thrust into his hand a large roll of papers, told him that they were no use to him now, and pushed him out into the street. In the excitement of capturing the German Minister's letter to Chryssospathi and of the first news of the Calimassiotis correspondence, I forgot to enter up M. Nochos in the Question Book for further inquiries to be made about him. About a week later a man called Vlassos came to see Tucker and said that a friend of his had in his possession some stolen plans of the El Kantara fortifications, which he was anxious to return to the British authorities for a suitable reward.

I asked what was the name of the man's friend. Tucker said he would find out, and at the next interview Vlassos told him that his name was Nochos.

"Where on earth have I heard that name recently?" I murmured. "Nochos? Nochos? Nochos? It's quite familiar to me."

Tucker shrugged his shoulders and as usual protected himself in advance from any possible blame for having lost some valuable paper or document by declaring that the name was completely unfamiliar to him.

"I've heard it somewhere quite recently," I insisted positively.

So Tucker and I set out to turn over the papers in the Annexe, without finding any allusion to Nochos. After about a couple of hours' search it flashed across me that I had never entered up for further inquiries the names which Davy Jones had given me a week before. I took out the little pocket-book in which I jotted down the news of the Legation every time he brought it, and there I found the name M. Nochos as a visitor of Falkenhausen's, who had received papers from him at two-thirty p.m. on March 15th.

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"Tucker, can you remember exactly what that telegram said which came last November just before V sent me to Capri?"\*

This was too much altogether for Tucker, who raised a plump protesting hand.

"Really, Captain Z, there's a limit to what a fellow can remember," he said reproachfully.

"It came from Cairo, and it said that the plans of the El Kantara fortifications had been stolen by a certain John Somebody or Other, who had escaped to Greece with them. Don't you remember we chased all round Athens to see if we could find out anything about him?"

Tucker shook his head.

"Yes, and I remember now the telegram added that he might be found through a certain Menelaus of the Greek Army."

"Well, the telegram has vanished for good now," Tucker said. "Everything that came about that time was burnt by Major V's orders. But I do seem to remember something about it, now you mention it."

I looked at the pocket-book.

"M. Nochos? Ask Vlassos what his friend's first name is."

In due course Tucker was able to tell me that the first name of the man who claimed to have the plans was Menelaus.

"That's splendid," I said. "I'll see Nochos and Vlassos this evening at six o'clock."

The two men turned up, and Nochos produced what looked to me a most professional series of plans of the Suez Canal Defences.

"How much do you want for this?" I asked.

"I think I deserve two thousand francs for what I have done for the British Government," Nochos replied, exuding consciousness of virtue.

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 315.



"How did these plans come into your possession?"

"I will tell you everything frankly," he promised.

"You had better," I warned him.

Last July, it transpired, a young man called John Antoniadès, who had been an interpreter attached to British Headquarters at Helmeḥ near Cairo, had stolen some plans of the El Kantara fortifications and escaping from Egypt had arrived in Athens with them, when he stayed at the Hotel Olympia. Nochos had seen him coming out of Schenck's house and had asked him what he was doing there. Antoniadès said that he had been showing Schenck valuable documents for which he had asked a million francs, but that Schenck had told him the price was too high and invited him to come back when he was prepared to take less. Nochos, filled with indignation at such treachery to the glorious British nation, had taken the first opportunity he could to steal the documents from his friend Antoniadès, who had hidden them in his mattress.

"And then I suppose you took them to Schenck?" I suggested.

Nochos gave me a pained look. How could I think he would do such a thing? No, he had hidden the plans in his own mattress at his lodgings until Antoniadès returned to Egypt, where he was arrested for the theft, but released for want of evidence. He had just decided to bring the plans to the British Legation, when he was caught by the Greek mobilization and sent off with his regiment to Macedonia. Unable to recover the plans from their hiding-place, he had not known what to do. Then some time at the end of September or the beginning of October he had met Colonel Cuninghame in Salonica and had offered the plans to him. As proof of this statement, he showed me a card of Cuninghame's, on which was written in his own handwriting: 'British Military Attaché.'

"What did Colonel Cuninghame say?" I asked.

According to Nochos Cuninghame had sent a telegram to Egypt for further information.

If Cuninghame had done this, it was difficult to know why the Cairo War Office should have telegraphed to V in November for information about Antoniades and Menelaus of the Greek Army. My opinion was that Cuninghame had not heard a word of what Nochos said to him, but had told him to write out his information and for that purpose had given him his card. Anyway, before Nochos could do anything more he was sent up to the frontier, and it was only this month that he had been able to reach Athens and recover the plans from their hiding-place in the mattress.

"And now you want a reward of two thousand francs for restoring them?" I asked.

Nochos thought that as a loyal friend of England he was entitled to as much as that.

I looked at him coldly.

"If you are such a loyal friend of Great Britain, how is it that at half-past two on the afternoon of March 15th you went to the German Legation and tried to sell these plans to the German Military Attaché?"

I never saw a man so much taken aback. As for Vlassos, the fat friend who had introduced him, he turned as white as the paper on which the plans were drawn and sank back helplessly into a chair. Nochos, however, soon recaptured his jaunty air and demanded to know who had seen him go to the German Legation.

"Why, I saw you myself," I said, "and you came out of it with the very same roll of paper as you brought here this evening."

"You have made a mistake," he declared. "You may have thought I came out of the German Legation, but I was calling on a lady friend next door."

## GREEK MEMORIES

"That won't do," I told him. "So I'll look after these plans myself. However, in case you are able to prove that you did not try to sell them to the Germans before you brought them to us, I will give you a receipt for them."

With this Nochos and his fat friend, who was perspiring freely, took themselves off. Half an hour later Nochos came back alone to say that he did not want the receipt, as he believed we were quite capable of accusing him of having stolen the plans himself.

We were naturally elated by the recovery of these plans and considerably astonished when on sending them to Alexandria we were informed that the Military Authorities denied absolutely that any plans had ever been stolen or that they had ever made any inquiries about John Antoniadès and Menelaus Nochos. Furthermore when the plans reached Cairo they were declared to be a clumsy forgery which would not have deceived anybody who knew anything about such things. This rather piqued me, because I had taken care to show the plans to Fairholme, who had not expressed the slightest doubt of their genuineness. I asked if the Military Authorities in Egypt were aware that the telegram sent from Cairo in the previous autumn had been destroyed and ascertained that they were aware it no longer existed. So I made a few private inquiries of my own in Egypt and discovered that Antoniadès, who was a youth of about nineteen, had not been an interpreter at all, but had acted as servant to a British General, in which capacity he might have had access to his papers. By the end of March, 1916, these plans would have been obsolete, which would explain why Falkenhausen was not more interested in them. There was not the least doubt of their authenticity, however, and presumably it was considered undesirable to advertise, by prosecuting the matter further, what it is kind to call a piece of carelessness in high places.

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There was a queer sequel to this business in April, when I received the following letter from Colonel Cunliffe-Owen:

A.H.Q. (1),  
Salonica.

Dear Z :

*The enclosed extract has been taken from the local Press. Probably the whole story is invented, but in case there should be any foundation whatever on which the transactions are based, it would be as well perhaps to point out that as regards the Military Authorities, plans of Greek fortifications are in no way needed and indeed, we think it would be extremely unwise to expend any money or to run any risk of friction with the Greeks on this point.*

*I trust that, before the procurement of any particular military information is suggested, the British Military Authorities in Macedonia would be consulted? No doubt you will agree to this proposition.*

*Yours sincerely,  
F. Cunliffe-Owen*

Extract from the Salonica newspaper *Anghaira* of April 12th, 1916:

### THE FORTIFICATION-PLANS OF SERRES STOLEN BY A GREEK SERGEANT

A very serious theft of documents, concerning the plans of fortification of the forts of Serres, has taken place a month ago under following circumstances.

In the small staff of Serres was serving as provisory adjutant the sergeant Menelaus Nochos of Lacedemonia.

The brother of Menelaus Nochos, named Lykourgos Nochos, after a great deal of perseverance from the part of the café-chantant singer Baby Nortia, employed at the Cabaret Haravghi (Dawn) and belonging to the British propaganda in Athens\*

\*She did not.

succeeded to entangle him in her nets and to make him her organ. Immediately after this conquest had been effected, she gave him plenty of money and entrusted to him to succeed in persuading his brother Menelaus Nochos to steal the plans of the Macedonian fortifications, which plans were to be found in one of the drawers of the desk of the head staff officer.

On the 9th/22nd [it must be either February or March, but more probably February], Menelaus Nochos broke open the desk of the head staff officer, took away the documents and disappeared. It is supposed also that his friend I. Tsangarakis took part in the theft.

Upon this, Menelaus Nochos got into a Greek passenger boat and arrived safely at Piræus without being in any way interfered with, and this because the Authorities at Serres did not immediately telegraph the event, as they had hopes to succeed in arresting Menelaus.

As soon as Menelaus reached Athens he hastened to throw away his military clothes and to dress up in civil. On the following day he presents himself before Mr. Mackenzie, Chief of the British Police, hands the documents over to him and received in payment, as declared by a French woman, a sum of 4,000 francs. From that day, Menelaus, under the false name of 'Menelaus Constantinopoulos,' together with his brother Lykourgos, took rooms at the Hôtel Pthiotis, Odos Patisision. After fully ten days had elapsed the Military Staff of Serres advised the Greek Secret Service in Athens about the matter. Upon this Mr. Chryssospathi summoned Mr. Yannacopoulos, a very energetic person, and after having given him the description of Nochos entrusted him to find him out and arrest him. From that day Yannacopoulos was going about all the coffee-houses trying to discover Menelaus. His first endeavours, however, proved fruitless and he began to despair. Matters were standing thus until Yannacopoulos was one day informed by a certain Valetsiotis in the Headquarters at Athens, that Nochos's friend Tsangarakis and a sergeant friend of his had sworn upon an officer of the Headquarters at the Odos Psaremilongou and that he suspects the sergeant to live in the Odos Salamina. On

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this information Yannacopoulos immediately sets to work again and succeeds this time to find out Tsangarakis, whom he follows and sees talking to a man whose description corresponds to that of Nochos. Two days ago Yannacopoulos again follows Nochos and sees him come out of the Hôtel Pthiotis accompanied by a French spy-woman. He goes up to him and salutes him as follows: "Good evening, Mr. Nochos." "Good evening," answers Nochos in apparent agitation. "I am an officer," says Yannacopoulos, "and I order you to follow me to the Headquarters." "This will never happen," says Nochos in a rage, and makes a movement in order to take out a revolver and commit suicide. Upon this Yannacopoulos, helped by the policeman Banos, arrests him, puts him in a carriage, and they all three drive to the Greek Secret Police Station. Here Nochos is searched and a voluminous correspondence is found upon him in which the names of other persons appear as having been involved in the affair, and which persons will all be arrested during the day.

Menelaus has confessed his guilt and after having been cross-examined by Mr. Chrysospathi has been sent to the Headquarters to be dealt with further.\*

To Colonel Cunliffe-Owen's letter I replied:

Athens.

20th April, 1916.

*My dear Colonel :*

*I have never even considered obtaining plans of Greek fortifications or information about the Greek Army as I am most particularly anxious to keep our organization here definitely clear of the possibility of such an accusation. The faint shred of truth in the article in the 'Anghaira' is that Menelaus Nochos came to me with the missing plans of the El Kantara fortifications which he had stolen from a man called John Antoniadis, who had stolen them last summer from Headquarters in Egypt. I bluffed him out of the plans and he*

\*All translations from Greek newspapers are left in the form in which I received them at the time.

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*retired from here much disgusted. He had already been in communication with the German Legation, and if the plans were any use no doubt they were copied; but probably by now they are obsolete. Two or three days afterwards, according to the Greek Press in Athens, he was arrested on some mysterious charge, but my name was not mentioned here. He is, I believe, now in prison. If you can find out anything about him, I should be much obliged, because if they arrest Antoniades in Egypt the man's contacts will become of interest.*

*By the way, the publication of General Howell's alleged article has had a most deplorable effect in Athens.*

*Yours sincerely,*

Z

General Howell,\* the allusion to whom was intended to be the sting in the tail of that letter, was Chief of Staff at Salonica. He had written some indiscreet eulogies of the Bulgarians which were printed in the Government newspapers and caused much bitterness throughout Greece, for they seemed conclusive evidence that Great Britain was still infatuated with the Bulgarians. To this indiscretion he added the dangerous indiscretion of attempting to communicate with Bulgarian Headquarters in order to promote pourparlers with the idea of detaching Bulgaria from the Central Powers into making a separate peace with the Allies. As a brother-in-law of the Buxtons, he was obsessed with the virtues of Bulgaria; but it was unfortunate that in the position he occupied at Salonica he should have indulged in amateur diplomacy. Not long after this he was transferred from Salonica to France, where in October he was killed. On his way back from Salonica he stopped in Athens and said to me, rather bitterly, that he supposed he had to thank me for undoing his work. I told him that I had been compelled to report the

\* The late Brig.-Gen. Philip Howell, C.M.G.

deplorable effect on Greek opinion of his pro-Bulgarian activities.

"That the account of your interview with the Bulgarian military representatives became common knowledge shows how careful you should be at A.H.Q. in confiding your secrets to the officers of the Greek General Staff," I observed. "That was my source of information, and it was by tapping that channel that I obtained the account of the whole business, which naturally I showed immediately to the Minister."

"If your idiotic organization in Salonica would mind its own business, it might do no harm, though it will never do any good," Howell snapped.

"The account of your recent activities did not reach us through our Salonica branch," I told him. "Sir Francis Elliot gave the Military Authorities an opportunity of contradicting the story. It was not contradicted. That being the case, you could hardly have expected him not to inquire the intentions of the British Government with regard to Bulgaria. If peace with Bulgaria is desired at the expense of Greece, we are entitled to know as much in Athens, so that we can give up the farce of pretending that we desire Greece to be belligerent."

"All this spy-work," Howell muttered resentfully, "is beating your wings against the air."

"There would be no spy-work if people like you did not provide work for spies," I retorted. "You pro-Bulgarians had your chance, and a deuce of a mess you made of it. You don't seriously suppose that flirting with the Bulgarians now is going to help matters? If you do, other people have a right to think otherwise, and if you can't conduct secret negotiations without an exact account of them reaching Athens you'd better stick to the military side of your job and leave diplomacy to professional diplomats."

So we bickered for a while, neither making the slightest



impression on the other's point of view. General Howell was a man of distinction and intelligence, and I regret that our only meeting was acrimonious.

ECHOES OF HEAVY FIGHTING ON THE DEPARTMENTAL FRONT

I must turn aside from politics to the financial problem of the Intelligence Department. The subsidy of £150 a month from G.H.Q. had been dropped in February, when A.H.Q. Salonica managed to cut free from G.H.Q. Medforce, and G.H.Q. Medforce became an entirely Egyptian affair. Expenses in Athens had been rapidly and steadily increasing, and early this month I foresaw that every halfpenny of the money due in April from Alexandria would be required to settle what was owing for March. I was just setting down to draft a poignant appeal for more money when I was notified that Major Dash would visit Athens, and that I was to discuss the future of the organization with him.

"Another of these cursed Paul Prys and Poll Parrots coming," I observed to Tucker when the telegram was decoded.

I was suffering from the exasperation set up by the peripatetic diplomacy of Captain Christmas, added to which was the nervous exhaustion of having to do so much of the clerical work myself. In a letter to my wife about this time I wrote:

*I was working at my desk yesterday from 9.30 a.m. till 7.30 p.m. without stopping, except for a few minutes to eat six prawns and drink a zabaglione (an egg beaten up with marsala).*

The visit from Feilding in February had produced nothing in the way of practical help, and I made up my mind that Dash's survey would be equally sterile of results.

In due course Dash arrived, and my gloomy anticipations were delightfully dispelled. At last I had found a man who was

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capable of understanding at once all our difficulties. The shock of meeting somebody connected with Intelligence work who could understand immediately what was wanted, and why it was wanted, proved too much for my nerves. The day after his arrival I was seized with one of the most villainous bouts of pain I had had since I had left Gallipoli. However, as it was vital to take full advantage of Dash's brief stay, I kept out of bed. I seem to remember that a couch was brought down to the Annexe, and that I lay there while Dash went through everything.

After a stay of less than forty-eight hours in Athens, Dash left for Alexandria, and a day or two later I sent off a statement of the financial problem which confronted us.

By March 28th Dash had evidently arrived back in London, for I received the following telegram from Alexandria on the 29th:

*We have been recommended by London to clear deficit and even accounts up to the end of March, and they have agreed to do this early next month. We are also recommending that your funds be increased to £1,200 a month, and anticipate no difficulty in obtaining it. We have received Dash's favourable report on your work. It is highly appreciated here, and you can count on every possible assistance from us. We are taking up the matter of your personal salary with London and are recommending that you should be granted the rank of Captain.*

On April 1st the following telegram arrived:

*£1,800 has been sent to you by us through the Minister, £600 to cover last month's deficit, and £1,200 to cover expenditure for the current month.*

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After the nerve-racking financial anxiety of March we could hardly believe we were not being made April fools with the announcement of such wealth on the way.

I celebrated the fine weather and the fine news at the close of March by driving to the Temple of Poseidon on Cape Sunium, and this was almost the last time I was to see anything of the Greek countryside during 1916. The excuse for the drive was the usual rumour of signals made to submarines, but it was really a shameless joy-ride. The fields on either side of the road were scarlet and blue with anemones; and, when I reached the temple standing with its eleven columns two hundred feet above the sea, the butterflies were already searching for honey in the small aromatic herbs that grew in chinks of the time-worn, weather-beaten ruin. I sat down with my back to one of the sun-warmed columns and watched at the headland's base deliberate fishermen hauling their nets. I marked where high up in a rift of the architrave a clump of yellow toadflax fluttered against the azure sky, and how a bronze butterfly, whose name I did not know, went coveting the honey of flowers but was for ever cheated of it by the brisk March breeze. That midday loneliness was exquisite. The pavement of the stylobate hoarded the sunlight. The husky lichens which clung to the marble crackled at a touch. Lizards were already pursuing one another in and out of crevices, and the hum of wild bees was about the air. I was too lazy to extricate from the sublime panorama of mountain, sea, islands, and sky each legend-haunted name. I was sick of names, I who had once cared so much for them. The eternal inquisitiveness of the last few months had made it seem that not to know the name of something again was in itself a holiday, and as I watched that unidentified bronze butterfly I would have damned the man that volunteered a name for it.

To move a hand slowly along the warm honeycombed marble of the great fluted column against which I leaned, to snatch idly

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at a darting lizard, to press a cushion of thyme until my fingers were fragrant as itself, these were the only actions of which I was capable.

I suppose I must have dreamed away three hours, sitting thus; and I was not to know such peace of mind again until more than another year should have passed, and I should be sitting thus contented in a mountain gorge of Samos.

## CHAPTER IV: APRIL

### INTERVIEWS

SOMETIME at the end of March or the beginning of April Emil Ludwig\* turned up in Athens and, as correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, interviewed King Constantine. This interview was published in the *Embros*, and it is worth preserving.

"It was I myself," he told Ludwig, "who led my army in war, and I can foresee what immense difficulties the restricted base of Salonica will cause the Entente in spite of their boasted fortifications. I understand why the French Government wishes to hang on to Salonica. I know equally well why the English were not anxious to collaborate in this scheme. What folly, then, that I should be expected to collaborate with them! Sentiment cannot influence me to favour one side more than the other. It is obvious that the Germans expect me to behave as a Greek and understand that to act as a Greek is the only way in which I can act correctly."

Ludwig then went on to say that every soldier-king who had doubled the size of his country in two wars was conscious of his power.

"When I told him," Ludwig wrote, "of my conversation with the Greek officers at Salonica, His Majesty replied:

'Yes, the whole Army is with me from the highest to the lowest and they are men who have shown the world that they know how to fight. My people at the beginning of the War had some sympathy for France, but the Entente gradually

\* The distinguished biographer.

did everything to destroy this sympathy, and by their aggressive behaviour they have even imperilled Greek friendship.' ”

Ludwig went on to state that King Constantine himself had no hate for the Bulgarians, although he urged that it was impossible to compel the Greeks to love the Bulgarians.

“ I am convinced,” said the King, “ that the Bulgarians will abandon Greek territory as soon as they have chased their enemies out of my country.”

His Majesty then went on to speak of Germany in the warmest terms.

“ Ask my peasants,” he said, “ if they know the Kaiser. Tell them it was Germany who gave them Cavalla, and they will tell you, ‘ no, it was the Kaiser.’ ”

I assured the King how greatly he was loved in Germany, and His Majesty smiled as he reminded me of a caricature in which he had been represented weighing the Kaiser against Great Britain.

“ But that was unjust,” he added, “ we could not do anything else except remain neutral.”

His Majesty went on to ask Dr. Ludwig his impressions of the savage country of Greece, having been informed that he had alluded to the uneasiness in Germany, over the political situation and the security in communication with Greece. When Ludwig told him that the Germans considered the Entente capable of any outrage, the King replied:

“ What the Entente has done is naturally a violation of International Law; but you can take it from me that they shall never lay a hand on Athens itself. The Ambassadors of the Central Powers, for whose safety some concern is being expressed in Germany, are my guests, and nobody shall do them any harm.”

I have not recorded the above interview as proof of the King's German sympathies, but as an example of his indiscre-

tion. Almost simultaneously with the publication of this interview His Majesty received General Mahon from Salonica and, as he shook hands with him at the end of the audience, his last words were:

“Whatever they say of me, always believe I am a true friend of England.”

When General Mahon came to Athens he was accompanied by Colonel Cunliffe-Owen, who was head of the Intelligence at Army Headquarters, and in conversation we were able to clear up various misunderstandings. I found that he was strongly opposed to the existence in Salonica of a branch of the E.M.S.I.B., for he argued that to maintain there the branch of an organization whose headquarters were in Egypt, and allow them to work independently of the Military Authorities, was an intolerable state of affairs. I could not help expressing a mild sympathy with his point of view, but I was not anxious to reopen departmental hostilities by committing myself too openly to his side of the question. I found that what he particularly objected to was not so much the espionage or A side of the activities as the counter-espionage or B side. Indeed, he admitted that the A side had given him much information of value. I ventured to point out the difficulty of exercising any control over the sources of A information without help from B. I added that after all B could take no kind of practical action without satisfying the Military Authorities of its practical utility, and expressed an opinion that the unsatisfactory state of affairs had largely been due to the remoteness of Alexandria and the insistence of Alexandria on there being no direct communication between the sub-branches of the E.M.S.I.B.

A minor object of that talk with Colonel Cunliffe-Owen was to get a refund from him of the 850 francs I had had to spend in maintaining that useless brigand Archondakis, whom

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he had sent down to Athens in January. In the end we compromised, by each of us paying half; but I had a tough fight to screw out of him the 425 francs due from A.H.Q. (I). That is not a reflection upon Cunliffe-Owen. If he had paid the 850 francs he would have had an equally tough fight to screw out of me our share.

### ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS

I have often wondered why the name of Captain Chrysospathi should have made such an impression on the Foreign Office, and I can only assume that his personality had been drawn by the French with such vividness that he had assumed the dimensions of a Richelieu or a Mazarin. On April 18th, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Sir Francis Elliot a proposal of the French Government that the British and French Ministers in Athens should concert about the line to be taken with the Greek Government over the Greek police and the general administration. He said that among other things of which the police had been accused was facilitating the supply of enemy submarines. The demand for the dismissal of Captain Chrysospathi had originally been proposed as the condition for a loan to Greece. The question of that loan had now been temporarily dropped, and it was the opinion of the French Government that the question of Captain Chrysospathi's dismissal should be raised without delay. Sir Francis Elliot was instructed to consult with M. Guillemin at once and telegraph what course he thought should be adopted.

To these proposals Sir Francis Elliot replied on April 20th. I made a note at the time of the general trend of his reply, and I am glad that I did, because it offers clear evidence that the Foreign Office was not misled by the diplomatic representative on the spot and equally clear evidence of Sir Francis Elliot's point of view about Mr. Venizelos, which



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has always been misrepresented by the detractors of the great Cretan.

*When I originally suggested that the dismissal of Captain Chrysospathi should be demanded it was as part of a definite programme and as one condition for a loan. The programme included the concentration of authority over the police of all kinds in the hands of a reliable officer, Colonel Zymbrakakis, who was dismissed by the Government. If Captain Chrysospathi's dismissal were asked for now, it would undoubtedly be refused. Even if it were granted, nothing would be gained, for the organization would continue to exist with someone equally objectionable at its head. Further, at the present moment there has been no particular incident which has brought Chrysospathi into prominence.*

*The Greek Government has already made the most of the fact that, despite all our efforts, we have hitherto been unable to discover a single base for supplying enemy submarines, and any fresh accusation that the supply of such submarines is facilitated by the police will doubtless be met by this fact.*

*Without being more fully informed than I am at present about the general and military policy of His Majesty's Government in the Balkans, whether for instance the Salonica expedition will be proceeded with and whether they desire or not to obtain eventually the co-operation of Greece, it is difficult for me to reply as to the line to be taken with the Greek Government.*

*There is no doubt that the present Government is unfriendly and will never be induced to join us. Should public opinion declare itself in favour of co-operation with us, the formation of another Government will become necessary.*

*The King has now some doubts about the invincibility of Germany and whether he has followed the right line. He is stated to have said recently that the defeat of Germany would result in his downfall. For this reason he is endeavouring to persuade both*

himself and others that the fall of Verdun is inevitable. His reason for this is not love of the Germans, but because he realizes that his people will hold him responsible for their lost opportunity and because the failure of German Imperialism will have struck a fatal blow at the doctrine of Divine Right in which he believes.

The view of Mr. Venizelos is that the agitation in favour of intervention before it is too late which he is now beginning will furnish the King with a last chance of retrieving his situation.

Mr. Venizelos holds that one of three alternatives :

- (1) That Roumania should enter the War ;
- (2) That 500,000 men should be massed at Salonica by the Allies, or
- (3) That a big victory on a European front should be gained by them

is required to create a demand by public opinion both in the Army and in the country for active co-operation with the Allies.

I suppose that the last of these three alternatives is the most probable. The question is whether in view of them it is desirable to encourage and in the end support Mr. Venizelos's movement of which the outcome may be something a little short of a revolution directed against the present Germanophile Government, but not against the King. My own view is that it is. It will, however, be necessary for us to act in close agreement with Mr. Venizelos and to be ready to use a show of naval force when the proper time comes.

Since we have already committed so many infractions of the rights of Greece as an independent and neutral State, we need not hesitate to take a further step which will not only benefit us but also Greece. Incidents should in the meantime be dealt with as they occur. They should not be provoked on small issues and above all nothing should be done to relieve the present Government of the financial difficulties by which their existence is threatened.

The French Minister concurs in the above view and will communicate with his Government in a similar sense.

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This lucid and unequivocal explanation of the Greek position was the last thing that the temporizing diplomacy of Great Britain desired, and the mood in which Sir Francis Elliot's statement was received is reflected in the nervous little telegram dispatched from the Foreign Office in answer to it:

*As any public statement regarding any eventual settlement of the different problems which may present themselves in the Balkans would doubtless be misunderstood in some quarters, it would be better to make no statement of such a kind.*

*With regard to your inquiries concerning the intentions of His Majesty's Government as to Greece and as to the Salonica Expedition, a further telegram will be sent to you later on.*

This revelation of a complete absence of any will at home to come to grips with the realities of the situation in Greece was made at a time when I was passing through a severe ordeal of the mind after hearing the news of the Easter Rising in Dublin. I hesitate to obtrude upon readers intimate beliefs which few of them will understand and with which fewer still will sympathize. With the consciousness of that obtrusion I shall do no more than record a simple fact without attempting to explain or justify those beliefs.

Lord Grey himself, in his book *Twenty-Five Years*, shows clearly how remote he was from any earnest attempt to understand the state of affairs in Greece. All he says of the year 1916 is that his last days of office were made tiresome by Greek complications. His mental weariness is obvious in every word of that chapter entitled 'The End of Office.' Of that Franco-British-Russian Secret Agreement which had been initiated by the French in March, 1915, he writes:

"I was not very anxious to carve up Asia Minor in advance: if we won the War, spheres of interest would have to be

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defined; but the thing seemed rather premature: what we needed first was to concentrate on winning the War."

Certainly never for a moment throughout 1916 did he show the least awareness that the whole of French action in Greece was inspired by nothing except the future of Asia Minor. The malice of Italy, the treachery of France, and the cowardice of Great Britain which ended in the martyrdom of Smyrna and left Constantinople to sleep like an old eunuch at the gate of Soviet Russia, all existed in embryo as early as the April of 1916.

The telegram of April 22nd from the Foreign Office was elaborated in a written dispatch dated April 25th, in which it was pointed out that:

Sir Francis Elliot's telegram had raised questions on which it had been necessary to consult other authorities. It was noted that Mr. Venizelos considered that in order to arouse public opinion in Greece and in the Army, it would be necessary either that Roumania should join, or that the Allies should have 500,000 men at Salonica, or that the Allies should win a big victory on the European front. The Foreign Office were afraid that none of these three alternatives or conditions was likely to be realized, at any rate in the near future. In fact, they appeared almost interdependent on one another, for if No. 3 were realized No. 1 would probably come into operation. As far as they could see it was most improbable that the Allied forces would ever reach the figure which Mr. Venizelos had mentioned as being necessary at Salonica. Whether any military operations would be undertaken from there was a matter on which they had not yet received a definite opinion; but it was very doubtful if Greek co-operation would be considered either desirable or necessary. On that point, however, the Foreign Office could not speak with absolute certainty, and it was to be regarded as an open question, with a tendency toward the negative.

At the same time, it was advisable to say at once that Sir Francis Elliot's suggestion in the penultimate paragraph of his

telegram in respect to supporting Mr. Venizelos even up to the point of a naval demonstration was utterly out of the question. Whatever measures France and Great Britain—and in this particular matter Great Britain had always followed the lead of France and not taken the initiative itself—might have thought necessary for the security of their naval and military forces in Greece, there was a very wide margin between precautionary measures of such a kind and supporting one political party by a display of armed force. It was inconceivable how such a line of action could possibly be justified or defended. It would be an interference in the internal affairs of a country whose independence Great Britain had guaranteed, of a character which would be almost unique in its recent history. It was therefore expected that Sir Francis Elliot would eliminate the possibility of such a course entirely from his mind.

This dispatch makes it clear that military and diplomatic opinion at home was by now hardening to the opinion that Mr. Venizelos was becoming a nuisance.

That being so, there was no excuse for allowing France to launch Venizelos upon the course of action which led four months later to the setting up of the Provisional Government; and after hearing in Athens the reaction of the Foreign Office to the situation we knew that henceforth that situation would be governed entirely by French policy.

Leave to transport the re-equipped Serbian army from Corfu to Salonica had been refused on April 3rd, and the French had worked themselves up into a state of considerable excitement over this refusal, in the course of which they succeeded in working the Greeks up into an equal state of excitement. The origin of this request was a suggestion of my own to keep the Greek General Staff and the Germans occupied while the Serbian Army was sent round by sea to Salonica. It was a piece of bluff. When the demand was first made there was no intention of transporting the Serbians overland. Probably under the

influence of the bitterness this proposal aroused in anti-Venizelist circles, the French began to wonder if its refusal by the Greek Government might not be the very excuse they were looking for to launch Venizelos into power with a naval demonstration, for let it be noted that on the same day that the Foreign Office was writing to Sir Francis Elliot to say that the notion of supporting Venizelos with a naval demonstration was quite out of the question, Briand was telegraphing from the Quai d'Orsay instructing the French to do everything possible to put Venizelos back into power, and giving them every encouragement to suppose that if necessary the French Government would support them with a naval demonstration. This dispatch from Briand was shown to me, and I acquainted Sir Francis with the tenor of it. Nobody outside the French Legation and Intelligence knew anything of it. Any leakage of information was their responsibility; but leakage there certainly was, for undoubtedly the Royalists were expecting a *coup d'état* at the end of April. In fact, it soon became a question whether they would not try a *coup d'état* first.

The announcement that Venizelos, who had by now started his paper the *Kiryx*, in which he had been lashing the Government daily, intended to offer himself as a candidate in the by-election at Mytilene on May 7th confirmed the Royalists in their belief that it was his intention to bring matters rapidly to a head. The Greek General Staff were pinning their hopes to the early fall of Verdun with the terrible set-back such a disaster would have given the Allies.

While Greek officers home on Easter leave from Cavalla were spreading everywhere the news that the Germans and the Bulgarians were concentrating for an offensive and that Greece would have to make up her mind to fight on one side or the other fairly soon, the King himself, who was less confident than his Staff about the fall of Verdun and who did not like

the idea of a naval demonstration, was debating a withdrawal from Athens to Larissa. Troops were being concentrated round the Palace in Athens owing to a rumour that at the next Venizelist conference armed Cretans would be brought into Athens and turned loose on the Royalists.

The proposed transport of the Serbians overland was used to stir up loyal feeling, and on April 24th some of the more fanatical officers of the Athens garrison signed a document re-establishing the Military Union of 1909. This had originally been formed by officers dissatisfied with King Constantine's behaviour when he was Crown Prince, and it ended in the military revolution which first brought Venizelos to the head of affairs. After establishing order in Greece, Venizelos passed a law forbidding officers to mix in politics, and the Military Union was dissolved. It was ironical that it should be brought into existence again to support that very Crown Prince who was now King and to overthrow Venizelos.

The nominal objects of the re-established Military Union were to resist the passage of all Serbian troops through Greek territory, to muzzle the Venizelist Press, and to prevent the holding of any Venizelist conference.

The situation during the last week of April reminded me in tenseness of the state of affairs in October, 1915, when German officers were reported everywhere in Athens, and there was a hint of war. Again those mysterious German officers arrived. On this occasion they were said to be naval officers. The rumour of their presence had evidently been disseminated in order to suggest that there were submarines waiting to attack the Allied Fleet when it anchored at the Piræus to put Venizelos into power. We set to work as we had set to work the previous autumn to test the authenticity of these reports, and I was able to give a positive assurance to the Legation that in the whole of Athens there was not a single German or Austrian officer in

addition to the ordinary staffs of the hostile Legations. However, what was significant was that the German Military Attaché with his Assistant suddenly left Athens for Larissa, presumably on the way to Monastir, where he would be able to bring back definite information about the rumoured German and Bulgarian offensive.

In the middle of all this tension a well-known irregular of the Macedonian borders, called Paul Ghiparis, called in at the Annexe to see me. He was a fine figure of a man, and he looked more than usually fine in the uniform of a captain of the French Infantry, which to our surprise he was wearing. He told me that he had been given the uniform at Salonica in order to carry out certain operations on the Macedonian frontier where he was now returning. He had been of some service to our organization in the days of the V Bureau in Academy Street, and I gave him a letter of instructions to an outlying agent of ours, which he promised to deliver safely.

About half an hour after he had left me, one of our people came in to say that, while Ghiparis was walking down Stadium Street, a police official in plain clothes called Papadakis, who had stirred up trouble at the last Venizelist conference, had spat contemptuously on the pavement from where he was sitting outside a café and asked in a loud voice who this popinjay was.

"You ask who this popinjay is?" Ghiparis had exclaimed, turning on him in anger, "I will tell you."

Papadakis drew his revolver; but Ghiparis was too quick and shot him twice in the thigh. According to another story, he had wounded two passers-by as well. Ghiparis had then retired into an adjoining restaurant, where he was now keeping at bay a large number of police and a military patrol. I had just sent out for further information when a waiter arrived from the restaurant to tell me that Captain Ghiparis wanted to know if he was to destroy with his other papers the letter I had given



him. I sent back at once that he was certainly to destroy the letter. Actually it was of little importance; but, as it had my signature, it would have given a handle to the other side if it had been found on him.

Ghiparis continued to keep the police and the soldiers at bay for two hours, and he did not surrender until all his ammunition had run out. His arrest in French uniform was considered by the French as a possible excuse for an ultimatum. The ultimatum suggested this time was an offer to put fifty million drachmas at the disposal of the Greeks, to guarantee the expenses of the Greek Army, to invite the Greek Army to guard our lines of communication, but not necessarily to attack Bulgaria or Germany, and (a most significant clause!) actively to occupy Greece.

That night at 1 a.m. a bomb exploded outside the door of the Bulgarian Legation. We never found out who was responsible for that bomb. The fact that there was nobody in the Bulgarian Legation that night except the porter looked as if it was anticipated, in which case it must have been put there by Government agents with the object of inculcating Venizelists, and so giving an excuse for a proclamation of martial law. On the other hand it was conceivable that the outrage had been committed by French agents with the object of provoking a conflict between the Royalists and the Venizelists, and thus giving the French an opportunity to fire in their ultimatum. Anyway, the Venizelists were by now thoroughly frightened of a *coup d'état* by their opponents. Mr. Aravantinos and Mr. Koutoupis, the directors of the admirable *Nea Hellas* and the two journalists most hated by the Royalists, fled from Athens. Even the imperturbable Talbot was shaken by the effect of the journalistic panic. He insisted that he had seen several new German faces lately in Athens, and that they must be German officers. He also told me that the Venizelist conference in

Athens had been indefinitely postponed, and that it was possible no Venizelist papers would appear on April 28th, the day originally fixed for the conference.

On the evening of the 27th we were told that the Headquarters of the Greek Army, which had been moved from Salonica to Larissa, were to be moved to Eleusis scarcely twenty miles from Athens; but I was able to assure myself that the King had forbidden the Military Union to take any action yet. The Union was now reported to consist of eight hundred officers under the presidency of General Yannakitsas, the Minister of War. Although the Venizelist conference in Athens had been postponed, it was understood that conferences were to be held at Salonica, Patras, Larissa, and Volo.

On April 27th, the *Hesperini*, a Government journal of particular virulence, which was being used by the Military Union as a kind of official organ, published a bombastic proclamation that definite action would be taken by high-souled patriots to-morrow in defence of the nation, the King, and public order; and in an attack on the *Patris*, a Venizelist newspaper, the *Hesperini* warned the editor that he had only a few days left in which to terrorize the community. This was taken to foreshadow the proclamation of martial law on May 1st. Such a proclamation would have had to be confirmed by the Chamber within five days, and the Chamber was not due to meet until May 7th. That Theotokis, the President of the Chamber, who was away in Corfu, had been summoned by telegram to return at once to Athens, looked as if the rumour of martial law was well founded.

In the end, Friday, April 28th, which was to be the day of fate, passed off quietly. The general impression was that the King's nerve had failed him at the last minute, and that he had vetoed the projected coup against the Venizelists.

In the middle of these alarums and excursions the French

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quarrelled with the Venizelist Press. A certain M. Turot, who had been entrusted with large sums for newspaper propaganda in Athens, had launched out and bought for 100,000 drachmas the favour of the *Embros* for the rest of the War. This was kept a strict secret, and the only people who were supposed to know about it were the French Minister, de Roquefeuil, Ricaud, Turot, myself, and Salençon, the proprietor of the lately established Radio Press Agency. Somebody let out the terms of the contract, and the Venizelist Press were furious, so furious that they threatened to publish the details of the transaction on the first day that the *Embros* changed its tone. All Talbot's tact was required to avert this, and finally the Venizelist Press agreed to keep quiet and contented themselves with attacking the Radio Press Agency for publishing false information. In the end the deal with the *Embros* fell through.

It might be mentioned here that Mr. Craufurd Price had already tried to swing the *Nea Hemera*, the other leading Government paper, into a change of tone. This was taken up by Cuninghame just before he ceased to be Military Attaché, and the proposal was that the *Nea Hemera* should become pro-British but anti-French. Manœuvres like this were a waste of time or money or both. The moment to buy newspapers had long gone by. Moreover, the Venizelist Press had without any bribery performed so loyally the difficult task of trying to justify the behaviour of the Allies, that if any subsidies were to be handed out they deserved to receive them.

## NEW FACES

We had tangible evidence of Dash's rescue work by the middle of the month, when Wilfred Lafontaine, who was in private life a chartered accountant in Constantinople, arrived from Alexandria to act as our cipherer and accountant. He had a gentle and charming personality, and his presence was of immediate

help to the smooth working of the Annexe offices, for I was able to put him in charge of all the departmental side and thus release Tucker from the strain of clerical work, which was beginning to tell even on his plump figure.

With the arrival of Lafontaine we were given leave to communicate directly in cases of urgency with other Mediterranean centres of Intelligence, and at the same time all political information was transferred from Matthews to myself.

This released poor Hasluck from his mushroom-like existence in the cellar of the Legation, and gave him more time to spend on making duplicates for the B branch of the E.M.S.I.B. in Alexandria of the cards in what was by now an index of more than three thousand names, and increasing daily at a great pace.

One morning, at the end of the month, Tucker came into my room and announced:

“ Miss Chapman and Miss Cook would like to speak to you.”

Even as I asked, “ Who the hell are Miss Chapman and Miss Cook ? ” Miss Chapman and Miss Cook entered close on Tucker’s heels before I had time to remove my legs from the desk on which they were resting.

Miss Chapman, who was tall, with gold pince-nez and what at first seemed like the manner of a head-mistress, was inclined to be a little ruffled by my not knowing who she was or whence she came. During the many months that Miss Chapman remained with us the story of that first reception was gradually elaborated by her into a one-act farce. Actually I believe that on hearing she had been sent out to me from London as a confidential secretary I assured her warmly that the unexpectedness of her advent did not make her any the less welcome. I must have tried to display *some* politeness, for her manner grew less severe.

Miss Cook, who was the fastest and most accurate stenographer to whom I have ever dictated, had been in Cox’s Bank.

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She was in every way the antithesis of Miss Chapman, but let both their personalities gradually emerge as my memories prolong themselves. I made her services over to Tucker in the Passport Bureau, and for what she must have saved him in the way of mistakes he owes an eternal debt. Before the whole organization was wound up in August, 1917, she was to have completed the necessary clerical work in connexion with over 60,000 passports without making a single mistake or involving me in a single letter or telegram of explanation through her fault.

As yet another addition to my clerical staff, Mrs. Hasluck was sent out from London.

It must have been in April, too, that Yanko Poseidon joined our service. For weeks he had been one of the stars in our card-index of suspects, and his record dated back to the first cards filled up at the British School last autumn. Indeed, his was one of the rare crimson cards which in those days represented the deepest dye of guilt.

One day Zanardi came to me and said that if I would give Poseidon an interview he would be able to clear himself of any accusation that he had ever been working in the interests of the Central Powers. What he had done, which he was willing to admit, was to run more contraband of war into Turkey along the Asia Minor coast than any other smuggler. Zanardi assured me he was convinced of Poseidon's sincerity, and that if I would engage him on a monthly salary I should find him loyalty itself. In view of the fact that a meeting between myself and so notorious an alleged agent of the enemy might rouse a premature curiosity among some of our own agents who with very little success had been trying to check Poseidon's contraband activities, Zanardi suggested that the meeting should be held in some place out of Athens. I am under the impression that in the end the meeting was arranged in the garden of a hostelry near

Marathon. Anyway, I remember clearly that it was in some pleasant rustic spot, and that we sat in an arbour, partaking of the refreshment which Poseidon himself had, with his usual grand air of courtesy, provided.

When Zanardi and I reached the place of assignation, I saw a small dark man with a round sleek head and a pair of long jet-black moustaches like the horns of a bull. He was dressed neatly in black, and he spoke English well, but slowly. Yet this slowness far from being tiresome was attractive, for it lent his speech a gentle meditative air, which was enhanced by the peculiar charm of his suave voice. On me he made an immediately favourable impression. His actions might be the actions of a smuggler and a contrabandist: his aspirations were the aspirations of an artist. Over *retzinato* wine and coffee we discussed past iniquities, and in the end, subject to a few more inquiries, I offered him work at a salary of five hundred drachmas a month.

Back in Athens, I talked the matter over with Sells and Hill, and we decided that the experiment of employing him might well be justified. Contraband running was by no means easy nowadays. No doubt the king of smugglers had decided to abdicate while he could do so with dignity.

About a fortnight after Poseidon had entered my service, Zanardi came to say that the new agent wished to speak to me on a matter which gravely affected his honour, if I would spare him a few minutes.

"My captain," said Poseidon, when he entered, "I have been told that Mr. Hasluck still keeps the card of informations about me before I am coming into your much-loved service. This has hurt me very much here," he pointed to his heart. "Because I am feeling that my honour has much damage from such a business. My captain, if you are content with my works for you, I beg you will give orders that the card of informations

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about me can be removed from Mr. Hasluck and put into your safe, so that if ever I do bad works for you it must be put back."

There was a tear in each of Poseidon's bright dark eyes as he spoke, and never had his voice trembled with such mellow emotion.

I went into the next room and asked Hasluck for the card.

"Up to tricks again, guv'nor?" Hasluck inquired, cocking his head on one side.

"No, no. The recording angel, while not yet prepared to obliterate Poseidon's list of evil deeds, has issued a decree nisi, and his card is to be put in my private safe. And make a note, will you, Hasluck, to notify all Intelligence branches which receive our Black List that Poseidon's name has been expunged."

In due course every Intelligence branch was notified; but those who keep black lists during wars do not rejoice like Heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Could I get Poseidon's name expunged from any other list? I could not. A year after he had been in my service and after his salary of five hundred drachmas had been paid to him in his own name and entered every month in my accounts, Alexandria wrote:

*We have not heard much of Poseidon lately. What is this man doing now? We are revising our black list and should like all latest information.*

Six months after he had been working for me I was receiving reports from Salonica of his nefarious activities miles away at the other end of the Ægean.

Finally, in the summer of 1917 an official black list was sent to me from London, and there was Yanko Poseidon's name as a star turn. It seemed easier for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than for a reformed suspect to escape from the *Malefactors' Bloody Register*.

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On March 24th the cross-Channel packet *Sussex* was torpedoed by U.B.29. Among the survivors was a young Greek who had been acting for his Government as inspector of guns and war material under manufacture at some well-known Ordnance works in England. On his way to Greece overland he was reported to have stated in Paris that the explosion had not been caused by a torpedo but by a mine. As several Americans had been killed by that explosion and President Wilson seemed inclined to break off diplomatic relations with Germany in consequence, the statement of this young Greek, whom we will call Nicolas, was most unwelcome, and it was immediately assumed that his expression of opinion was inspired by German sympathy. We in Athens were asked to inquire into his antecedents, and we were able to assure the people at home that Nicolas was an enthusiastic supporter of Great Britain. He explained that he had attributed the explosion to a mine because the explosion occurred forward and he saw no sign of a submarine. At the same time he admitted that he could not state definitely the cause of the explosion and certainly would not commit himself to the assertion that it was not a submarine.

Sells and I interviewed him, and a report of the attack on the *Sussex* as related by Nicolas was sent by me to London. It must have been a grim scene, and if the situation had not been taken in hand by a British naval officer travelling with dispatches, whose efforts were seconded by a Spanish diplomat, the scene might have been grimmer still. About fifty passengers and crew were killed outright by the explosion and many were wounded. The captain's leg was broken and for some time he was unable to wireless the position of his ship. The crew, mostly Belgians, lowered the boats, and the first to get into them was a Belgian doctor and a number of Belgian nurses, who rowed off, though later on they returned to the ship. In the forward saloon, where there was three feet of water, several of the members of an



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Italian theatrical company died of terror, and their corpses propped up against the tables kept in death their last grimaces, the sight of which made the blood curdle. The crew had started to cut off the fingers of the dead passengers in order to steal their rings, and then the British naval officer had driven them up on deck at the pistol's point. Later on, when the position of the *Sussex* was made known, trawlers arrived, and the same naval officer superintended the transfer of the wounded from the stricken packet to the rescuing craft. These details of Nicolas's account stick in my memory. How far they are accurate I do not know; but the belief he expressed in Paris that the *Sussex* might have been struck by a small mine laid by a submarine was enough to make a suspect of him, and he figured to the end of the War in black lists.

Later on that summer I tried to get his name expunged, and took occasion to point out that Nicolas had been in England for two years *on a mission* for the Greek Government, his job being to inspect material that was being made for them at some ordnance works. What was the result? He was entered up in the black lists as having been *a missionary* in England for two years!

## CHAPTER V: MAY

### THE SURRENDER OF FORT RUPEL

AT the beginning of May, General Yannakitas continued to nurture the Military Union, of which the Military Governor of Athens, Colonel Constantinopoulos, figured as the ostensible leader, and an attempt was made to persuade all officers in both services to sign the League and Covenant. Most of the Cavalry officers signed, and a large proportion of the infantry; but there was a very small response from the Engineers, the Artillery, and the Navy, while officers on leave from Macedonia reported that Venizelist feeling was gaining ground among officers and men up there.

On May 8th came the result of the by-elections. The Venizelist candidate in the Drama district was elected by a large majority, which was a heavy blow to the Government, because much feeling had been provoked against Mr. Venizelos in Cavalla owing to his willingness the previous year to consider ceding Cavalla to Bulgaria when negotiations to bring Bulgaria into the War on the side of the Allies were in progress. We may find in the result of this election the inspiration of the ignominious surrender to the invading Bulgarians in September.

In the Island of Thasos, as might have been expected, the Venizelist candidate was easily elected. But the real blow came when the result of the by-election in Mytilene was declared, for there Mr. Venizelos was elected by no less than 16,693 votes to 243, the Turks abstaining from the polls. Yet Sir Basil Thomson in writing about this period says that Venizelos had "quite an insignificant following." \*

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 117.

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A week after his election, Venizelos published a severe indictment of the King's methods of government, newspaper reports of which for abroad were stopped by the Greek censorship. So confident were the Venizelists of the country's growing support that Tsoucalas, an Independent Deputy for Attica-Bœotia, proposed to resign his seat in order to test the electors again and prove that Old Greece was as much in favour of Venizelos as New Greece. As a counterbalance to the Military Union the Venizelist Military League was now formed, the power and influence of which increased rapidly.

If at this moment the British Government had come forward with unequivocal support of Venizelos, there would have been an end to troubles in Greece. As it was, the whole of the initiative was left to the French, and Venizelism was exploited in the wrong way. Mr. Venizelos himself did not believe in a republic for Greece. He deplored King Constantine's autocratic methods, and he was beginning to make up his mind that the only way out of the muddle would be the abdication of King Constantine; but so far indeed from having any desire to impose a republic on Greece he expressed himself very strongly against such a form of government for the Greeks in their present stage of development. The attitude of the British Government toward Mr. Venizelos was chiefly determined by the fear of his supposed intention to overthrow the dynasty. And in this attitude the British Government had the support of the Russian Government. That was a perfectly intelligible attitude. What was less intelligible was the weakness that allowed the French to pursue their own policy in spite of British and Russian disapproval, to which was added Italian opposition, not from any tenderness for the dynasty, but from a dread of Greece's growing strong under the leadership of Venizelos.

On May 26th, Fort Rupel was surrendered by the Greeks to the Bulgarians. The apologists for King Constantine have

used much ink to prove that in the circumstances such a surrender was inevitable. It was obviously inevitable unless the Greek Government had been prepared to notify the Germans and Bulgarians, whose secret note was received on May 23rd, that the occupation of Rupel would be regarded as a *casus belli*. This could never happen while the Skouloudis Government was in power, for that Government was the token of Greece's refusal to go to war against Germany. Public opinion at home and in France seemed surprised that the moment the Bulgarians occupied Rupel every Greek did not rush to arms, and even in Athens cool judges like Talbot began to believe that the surrender of Rupel would compel a change of policy. I remember the very words he used, as he came into Erskine's little room off the Chancery.

"There's a hell of a buzz about this Rupel business."

And I remember replying that it would be nothing more than a buzz.

On May 31st I wrote :

*Although we have now had two days to consider the occupation of Rupel by the Bulgarians there does not seem to be any sign of such indignation as will create a change of policy. In conversation with Talbot last night I said as much, but he was inclined to be more optimistic. It is natural to be enthusiastic when one only hears the enthusiastic declarations of enthusiastic Venizelists ; but I am prepared to stake my reputation that nothing will happen.*

The day after the occupation of Rupel, Mr. Skouloudis announced that, however far the Germans and Bulgarians advanced, Athens would certainly be defended. At the very moment when the surrender of Rupel was being discussed between the Government and the Germano-Bulgars, Greek troops on manœuvre were practising an attack upon Athens.

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As the Government knew exactly when Rupel was going to be occupied, the sham attack upon Athens was suggestive.

Sarrail's response to the occupation of Rupel was to propose in co-operation with Admiral de Robeck to extend the Turkish and Bulgarian blockade as far as the Gulf of Orfano. After the destruction by him of the Demir-Hissar bridge at the beginning of the Salonica campaign the Greek Staff had complained that the cutting of their communications was making it impossible to supply their troops. To help them Sarrail had placed at their disposal twenty-five motor-lorries which ran from Salonica to Serres by road. He now declared he must withdraw these motor-lorries because their route was too near the Bulgarian advance. He pointed out, too, the absence of any guarantee that food passing into Western Thrace by way of Cavalla was not going to supply the enemy. Hence the proposed blockade.

Sir Francis at once telegraphed to the Foreign Office that such a punitive measure should not be resorted to until it was a matter of absolute military necessity.

This is what I wrote at the time:

*Of course the whole situation is so extremely complicated by the inability of anybody in command to arrive at any conclusion whether or not Greece's assistance will be wanted, that any diplomatic action or even expression of opinion is merely groping in a fog. If we were told definitely here that the entry of Greece was desired, we could act accordingly ; but not a sign do we see or hear of a definite policy, and it seems always as if any hint of a policy from here whether to our Foreign Office or the Quai d'Orsay provokes inevitably either contrary instructions, or instructions so vague and amorphous that successful diplomacy by the Entente Ministers is ruled right out. If the return of Venizelos to power is going seriously to hamper plans which lead and look toward quite another direction, why cannot we be told that ? If the return of Venizelos*

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*to power is desired, it is easy to secure it in quite a dozen ways outside the use of naval force. It is not surprising that German diplomacy always wins, though they have in Athens one of the most effete Ministers it is possible to imagine.*

*The Government is thoroughly nervous about the Fort Rupel business ; but, as we seem just as nervous, they will probably have time to recover their courage. Meanwhile, the military fête in the Stadium for the King's Name Day has been postponed a week on the grounds of unreadiness. It is felt here that it will probably be postponed indefinitely.*

The problem of the passage of the Serbian troops was finally solved on May 29th, by which date 100,000 soldiers with equipment had been transported to Salonica by the long sea route round Cape Matapan without the loss of a man. " This successful operation," says Sir Basil Thomson, " was a slap in the face for de Roquefeuil, who had been deluging the French Admiralty with reports on the activity of German submarines in Greek waters." \* To support this sneer Sir Basil Thomson quotes a fatuous remark of Admiral Dartige du Fournet, who was a bitter personal enemy of de Roquefeuil. So far from the operation's being a slap in the face, it was a triumph for the Allied Intelligence Service in Athens, for throughout May we worked to foster a conviction that the transports of the Serbian Army would land in the Gulf of Corinth in spite of anything that the Greek Government might urge in protest. At my suggestion de Roquefeuil and Ricaud urged the Quai d'Orsay through Admiral Lacaze, the French Minister of Marine, not to let M. Briand desist for a moment from demanding the passage overland from the Corinthian Gulf. When, owing to the unwillingness of the Foreign Office to associate itself with the French in this demand, we saw a risk of our bluff's being called

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 118.

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a little too soon, we persuaded the Quai d'Orsay to accept as a compromise the passage of the Serbian transports through the Corinth Canal, a privilege which Mr. Skouloudis most unwillingly granted. At the same moment the Serbian transports set out by the long sea route. Throughout the exchange of notes during April and May we were continually sending indiscreet agents to visit possible landing places along the Corinthian Gulf. The Germans played beautifully into our hands by spreading rumours in Athens that various transports had already been torpedoed in the Corinthian Gulf. So efficient was our counter-espionage at this time that no news of the departure of the Serbian transports from Corfu reached Athens until they were already safely round Matapan. Then there was a rush of enemy agents to the west of Crete, which the occupation of Suda Bay by British naval forces made a waste of time and energy. So far from the successful operation's being a slap in the face for de Roquefeuil, it was a hearty pat on the back.

### DOMESTIC

All through April I had been moving to escape from bugs, and about the 15th of May I took a house in Phaleron for three months. It was a jerry-built villa close to where on the first evening I spent in Athens with Simpson on leave from Gallipoli we had that absurd motor smash.\* It seemed eight years ago instead of eight months. The new house had the advantage of being detached, and there was a clear view across open country to Athens. What took my fancy particularly was a large wire cage in which my bed was placed, and which was entered by a door. This would obviate the use of a stuffy mosquito-curtain, and the fineness of the mesh would keep out all bugs and mosquitoes. It might even keep out sandflies. I turned over in bed that night securely confident of a gloriously undisturbed

\* *Athenian Memories*, pp. 20-24.



“ Au Capitaine Compton Mackenzie—

Souvenir très cordial de l'intimité des deux services de  
renseignements anglais et français au Grèce ”

The photograph thus inscribed was given to me by Captain  
de Roquefeuil





sleep. Within half an hour I was awake scratching with that curiously familiar gesture at the back of my neck. I switched on the light to deal with the stray bug which had somehow invaded the cage and saw to my horror more bugs than I had ever seen gathered together before, a loathly multitude retreating to take shelter in the wooden frame of that deceitful cage.

What a night!

Next morning I notified the landlord that his patent cage had been burnt, and by spraying the walls with petroleum every day and with the help of a mosquito-net I slept again.

Moon was keeping me company down at Phaleron, and there was a watchman on duty in the garden, a British sea-faring man who had grown old in Cyprus with a Greek wife and was on his beam ends in Athens when we engaged him.

My working hours at the Annexe were now from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Then I drove down to Phaleron, lunched, and took a siesta from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m. From 5 p.m. till 7 p.m. I worked at a novel which I finished in November, and for which I had a handsome contract. From 7.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. I worked at the Annexe. Then I dined usually as conspicuously as possible in some restaurant, and unless I had to interview some agents or informers, which was only too often, I went home and retired to bed soon after midnight. Lisa, of whom I have written in *Athenian Memories*, accompanied me to every house in turn, and I think it was down at Phaleron that Josephine first came to me as cook. Josephine, a Greek of Constantinople, was fantastically ugly; but in spite of that she had managed to acquire a stray son who by now was about eight years old. Moreover, she presently acquired what, much to Lisa's amusement, she called a *fiancé*.

"*Josephine fiancée*," Lisa told me, pink with delighted laughter. "*Non pense. Pense amour. Non fiancée. Jamais fiancée. Amour, oui, beaucoup.*"

Lisa, dainty as an antique china shepherdess and with a skin netted with fine seams like old porcelain, keeping the house as exquisite as herself, once the bugs had been expelled; Josephine pottering round a disordered kitchen like a bedraggled scarecrow but cooking almost always well; Moon beaming at me across the dinner-table; the old seaman leaning out over the garden wall smoking and watching the moon; the sun-struck straight road between Athens and Phaleron with the false-pepper trees on either side quivering in the midday heats; the ratcheting of the cicalas in the trees; the rich blue clouds of morning-glory wreathing the neighbouring villas; the dusty ochreous countryside between Phaleron and Athens scattered with isolated cypresses; the classic city herself clustering round the base of columned ruins four miles away—I think of all these when I think of Phaleron in that feverish summer of 1916.

The strain of the work was beginning to tell on me a little. I spent a third of the month of April, and the first ten days of May, laid up with acute pain, and although of course that did not prevent my getting through plenty of work, it kept me away from the office more than I liked, the result of which was that a good deal of quarrelling went on between the section chiefs, and during my absence from the office there were several vexatious arrests of our accredited agents and clerks by the Greek police. These were all of too much of a sameness to be worth recording in detail, and I only mention them because writers like Sir Basil Thomson have apparently persuaded themselves that even so early as this date 'de Roquefeuil's Legation Outrage Squad' was terrorizing Athens.\*

At the end of the month a communication arrived from Alexandria on the subject of arrests which gave me a chance to hit back, for I had been suffering from a series of fatuous communications of this nature emanating presumably from the

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, Chapter VIII.

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corps of counter-espionage experts of whose mobilization Feilding had advised us. My answer was approved and initialed by Sir Francis Elliot.

MEMORANDUM from ALEXANDRIA B/1/5590

I would point out to you the extreme inadvisability of recommending arrests in future without referring to this office. It is not, of course, intended to suggest that in cases where the Naval Authorities find it necessary to arrest persons to prevent immediate harm to British or Allied interests they should refrain from doing so, but we feel that in all cases of suspects reference should be made to this office before they are arrested, and we would ask you in future to recommend no such arrests without reference to us.

Our reason for making this request is that we consider that the procedure which prevails in London can with advantage be followed in the E.M.S.I.B. Organization here, viz.: that the names of all suspects are reported to the Central Organization together with all evidence against them, and that only on the decision of the Central Organization, arrived at after a careful examination of such cases, should arrest take place. Premature arrest is apt to result in the cutting of threads which, if allowed to remain intact, might lead to valuable results, and it is precisely to avoid such occurrences that the Central Bureau has been established.

The officials who have charge of the investigation Branch will, on receiving information against a suspect, add to it the already existing evidence in the same case, and when they consider the time has come for action, will advise that it shall be taken. Should it be desired to carry out any arrest which has not been advised by the Central Bureau, application should be made to it by you for advice, which will usually take the form of an opinion as to whether or not sufficient evidence exists to justify it.

This is, of course, not intended to apply to cases where immediate arrest is necessary to prevent an occurrence seriously prejudicial to British or Allied interests.

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The above remarks are sent to you for your own guidance, and apply only to your recommendations for arrest. The question of arrest carried out by the Navy on their own responsibility will be dealt with through another channel, the details being communicated to you when arranged.

16. 5. 16.

MEMORANDUM from Z to ALEXANDRIA

May 29th, 1916.

In reply to B/1/5590 of 16/5/16

This memorandum about the official character of which I am not quite clear, as it is not signed either by the Director or by the Assistant-Director, calls for comment.

The procedure which prevails in London could obviously be followed with advantage by the E.M.S.I.B. organization in Egypt since London and Egypt both have the advantage of British Government. With regard to Athens the case is entirely different and the word arrest, as far as the E.M.S.I.B. organization is concerned, ceases to have any value. Representations to the Hellenic Government will inevitably be met with a refusal to take any action. Arrest therefore, so far as Athens is concerned, narrows itself down either to kidnapping an enemy agent or trapping that enemy agent when embarked upon an imprudent maritime excursion. With regard to the former method the E.M.S.I.B. organization would always be consulted since the E.M.S.I.B. organization would have to justify the action of its representative in Athens; at the same time that representative in Athens could not proceed to so extreme a measure as kidnapping in a neutral capital without consulting unofficially representatives there of British diplomacy. In the latter case, i.e. the imprudent maritime excursion, it is necessary to distinguish between arrest and temporary detention for examination. I have had several travellers to Italy stopped and examined at Messina; but the only occasion when I had been asked to have a suspect definitely arrested I took care to consult the E.M.S.I.B. organization in advance.

When the Athens records have reached the E.M.S.I.B. in their entirety, I suggest that whatever expert there occupies himself with the quality of evidence should indicate to me what persons he considers ripe for arrest, and that I should be authorized by fair or foul means to obtain possession of their persons. The same expert should in my opinion point out to me where exactly the case against these prominent criminals fails or might fail to convince the judicial authorities: I should then endeavour in every way to fill in these gaps whenever possible. Major Dash, who will presumably be accepted by the E.M.S.I.B. as an expert, pointed out to me that we had on our list much fuller evidence of guilt than in any but exceptional cases in London, but also he suggested to me that to continue after a certain point specializing on one person was a mistake, and a waste of time. I suggest, therefore, that a special box labelled 'ripe', which would contain only the names of those people whose activities have sufficiently come under the observation, judgment, and diligence of the E.M.S.I.B., be brought into existence.

## CHAPTER VI: JUNE

### NERVOUSNESS IN ATHENS

JUNE opened dramatically with a solemn Te Deum sung in the Cathedral to celebrate the King's Name Day. That morning the first news of the Battle of Jutland had reached Athens, and what was considered a defeat of the British Navy filled with joy all the enemies of the Entente. The German and Austrian diplomats put on their richest uniforms to drive to the Cathedral and bow to the cheers of the populace on their way, care having been taken by a mixture of largesse and threats to secure this favourable reception. A small boy who clapped the carriage with the British representatives was immediately arrested and led off by half a dozen policemen, any one of whom was twice the size of the culprit. I was ludicrously reminded of the scene in *Pickwick Papers* when Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman were being taken in the sedan chair to the house of Mr. Nupkins in Ipswich, there to answer the charge of proposing to commit a breach of the peace by fighting a duel.

The scene inside the Cathedral was magnificent: all lighted candles and lace and aiguillettes and pale-blue plumes of cavalry officers. The most gorgeous figure of all was one of the Austrian Secretaries in a uniform of white and gold. The King himself was in the highest spirits and when shaking hands with the German diplomats such high spirits seemed to those who were depressed by the news from the North Sea to be the assumption of a deliberately offensive hilarity.

Suddenly there was a hush, and through the glitter came

Venizelos in unrelieved black. As he approached to take his place for the service, his enemies with one accord moved aside and left him standing apart from those who were gathered to celebrate the King's feast. It was like the moment in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* when the disgraced Wolsey makes his solitary exit from the crowded scene. During this *Te Deum* Venizelos may have been wondering if he had been wise in deciding to give the King one more chance to work in harmony with himself, and whether the proclamation of a provisional government, for which Sarraïl was to prepare that very afternoon by declaring Salonica in a state of siege and imposing martial law, ought to have been postponed.

The truth is that Mr. Venizelos himself always disliked the notion of such a revolutionary step. His enemies have insisted that from the beginning of 1916 he was plotting the action to which he did not finally commit himself until the 25th of September. That is not so. Supporters like Sofoulis were always urging him to take a definite step; but throughout the first half of this year Venizelos was continually restraining them. When last month the Government had tried to break up the Venizelist conference in Athens, Venizelist opinion was much consolidated; but the leader himself appeared nervous of the course to which his followers were bent on committing him. It was not until the surrender of Fort Rupel to the Bulgarians brought matters to a head that Venizelos at last agreed to fly to Salonica and there proclaim a provisional government. As soon as his decision was made Arghyropoulos, the ex-Prefect of Salonica, was sent off to make the final arrangements for the coup. The only people who knew of this projected move were Sir Francis Elliot, M. Guillemin, de Roquefeuil, Ricaud, Talbot, and myself. Then, just as the arrangements were being finally perfected, the French Minister, as usual, could not resist the pleasure of taking one or two people into his confidence, with



the result that rumours began to fly round Athens of some drastic step that was soon to be taken.

The disinclination of Mr. Venizelos to take the plunge at the beginning of June may have been increased by the unsatisfactory relations that now existed between the French and British Commands. General Mahon had been recalled, presumably because he was suspected of being too Francophile. He had been replaced by General Milne,\* whose attitude suggested that he had been given the Salonica Command as a strong man able certainly to hold his own with Sarraïl, and perhaps with the Bulgarians. He had shown himself openly opposed to the proclamation of martial law in Salonica, and he followed this up by apparently forgetting to tell his liaison officer to notify the French Commander-in-Chief of the memorial service for Lord Kitchener until ten minutes before the service took place.

In contrast with what looked like deliberate discourtesy to the French, General Milne and his Staff went out of their way at this time to be particularly polite to the officers of the Greek Garrison. It was reported to us in Athens that at a dinner when Colonel Messala, the Greek Commandant de la Place at Salonica, was present, the refusal of the British to co-operate in any offensive move on the Macedonian front was openly discussed. I telegraphed immediately to the E.M.S.I.B. branch in Salonica, suggesting that they should tactfully convey to the proper military quarter a warning about Colonel Messala's Germanic bias and his close co-operation with Falkenhausem, the German Military Attaché in Athens. Some days later General Milne protested in a letter to Sir Francis Elliot against the dispatch of such telegrams by 'irresponsible persons or agents', adding complacently that Colonel Messala was giving the British General Staff valuable information.

Yet, almost on the very day this letter arrived in Athens, a

\* Field-Marshal Sir G. F. Milne, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

## JUNE

telegram was received at the Legation from Army Headquarters to say that they had heard from a most reliable source that four German officers were now working with the Greek General Staff in Athens. This was not true, but such a telegram coming as it did direct from General Milne's own Headquarters afforded Sir Francis Elliot an opportunity to make a few pointed remarks in his reply to the General.

This telegram from A.H.Q., if actually untrue, had a bearing on events in Athens. Extracts from the telegrams I was sending to London and Alexandria will show why:

Saturday, June 3rd.

*A.H.Q. has telegraphed they hear from usually reliable source four German officers are working with Greek General Staff in Athens. We cannot substantiate this report, which may be due to visits recently paid by Dousmanis at 2.30 a.m. to house of Hoffmann's brother-in-law, Gravaris. Visits were possibly to make arrangements in case of naval demonstration by Entente here.*

Monday, June 5th.

*At 9.30 p.m. yesterday night Dousmanis, Chief of Greek Staff, went to house of Dellaporta, Commander of Motor Transport. At 9.45 arrived Courevelis and Exadactylos, Officers of General Staff. At 10 p.m. came two cars of German and Austrian Legations with Ministers, Naval and Military Attachés. At 11 p.m. a corporal was sent by Dousmanis with document to Bulgarian Legation. At 11.30 p.m. corporal returned with another document. At 12.30 the meeting broke up.*

*B. From absolutely reliable source I hear that Minister of War had said that if much harder pressure was brought to bear on Greece by Entente demobilization was probable. If Greece does not demobilize she will be forced in to fight beside Entente. Royalists are feeling desperate; but may make final effort by proclaiming*

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*martial law and holding packed meetings to protest against Entente. Gounaris said yesterday that if Entente pressed much harder Greece must fight on that side.*

*G. Rumours were flying around to-day that Allied Fleet was on its way to Piræus. Athenians not at all perturbed. They are in apathetic condition and strong action from without would lead them anywhere.*

Thursday, June 6th.

*At a meeting of Chamber yesterday Skouloudis insisted that there existed no previous agreement with Bulgars respecting Rupel ; that Greeks retired to avoid being drawn into general conflict ; and that General Staff had only acted on orders of Government.*

*Macedonian deputies desisted from interpellation having been persuaded that this would aggravate difficult position of country.*

*Dragoumi and Stratos attempted to throw on Venizelos blame for conditions prevailing. Prime Minister spoke of martial law in Salonica and of protest to Allies whose decision they were now awaiting.*

*General impression that Government is uneasy and is trying to render Venizelos responsible so as to maintain power.*

Wednesday, June 7th.

*Further to my telegram of June 5th :*

*Another meeting took place last night in house of Pappavassiliou, Chief of Staff of First Army Corps, between Dousmanis, Chief of Naval Staff, another naval officer, Vassos, aide-de-camp of Crown Prince, Hoffmann, notorious German agent, and a civilian unidentified. In the course of meeting, Dousmanis, Chief of Naval Staff, sent motor to fetch his brother, the Chief of General Staff, who arrived shortly afterwards. When meeting broke up at midnight the brothers Dousmanis left with Hoffmann and his companion, dropping Hoffmann at his house. Taking into consideration other*

## JUNE

*meetings of a similar sort that have been held with Hoffmann, noting that Hoffmann has a large organization to fight our anti-submarine Intelligence, observing that two German submarines were reliably reported on Monday off Salamis and Poros and one off Aegina yesterday, and finally marking the activity of the agents supposed to be communicating with submarines, e.g. an American sailor called Lestage, submarine attack may be anticipated in the event of any naval force assembling near Piræus within next few days.*

*Communicated by Military Attaché to Foreign Office, and by Naval Attaché to Rear-Admiral at Mudros.*

### THE NOTE

Whether or not it was the recall of General Mahon and Admiral de Robeck that frightened Mr. Venizelos out of his projected coup at Salonica only Mr. Venizelos himself could have told us. General Sarrail quotes a telegram\* from M. Guillemain of May 31st in which Mr. Venizelos particularly asks that a state of siege shall not be proclaimed in Salonica. Nor by his own account was General Sarrail anxious at this date for the establishment of a Provisional Government. Another explanation for the objection of Mr. Venizelos to the proclamation of martial law in Salonica was a fear that the Greek Government might retort by proclaiming martial law throughout the rest of Greece, which would mean that any chance of a successful movement in favour of intervention would be killed. If the Government fear of a naval demonstration was acute, Venizelist nervousness was not less acute. A French torpedo-boat was kept at the Piræus with steam up, and arrangements were made that Venizelos and his most prominent supporters should escape if necessary from a remote part of the coast in a small boat flying the Greek Ensign upside down for recognition.

\* *Mon Commandement en Orient*, p. 364.

Immediately on top of this it was announced that the French had proclaimed a blockade of Greece, or rather that they had imposed a blockade without any previous notification. This was the moment when the *aide mémoire* arrived from the Foreign Office to warn General Milne that he was only under General Sarrail's orders so far as the actual defence of Salonica was concerned and that he was not to take part in any offensive. To this General Sarrail replied a day or two later that if the British Army did not wish to advance he could advance without them.

I am under the impression that Sir Francis Elliot was never notified at all by the Foreign Office of the French intention to impose a blockade and it is possible that the Foreign Office itself was never informed of that intention. Anyway, Sir Francis Elliot was certainly being discouraged at home from doing anything to encourage Mr. Venizelos.

The result of M. Guillemin's indiscretion in chattering about the proposed Venizelist coup was to confirm the belief in Government circles that the Cretan was to be put at the head of affairs with the help of the Allied Fleet.

It now looked like a race for power between the two sides, and by Tuesday, June 6th, the police were searching for arms all carriages and motor-cars coming in or going out of Athens. So uncertain was the future seeming that I had to consider the possibility of a hurried flight, and after deciding that the Island of Syra in the middle of the Cyclades would be from every point of view, but chiefly on account of its unrivalled telegraphic facilities, the most suitable place to which to retire, I made arrangements with the French to put a ship at our disposal in case of need.

However, the crisis did not precipitate itself, and the blockade proceeded prosaically enough. There was plenty of food in Athens; but the Greek Government circulated a statement that the Allies would not allow food to be sent from Athens to the

provincial ports where there was much more suffering. Sir Francis Elliot telegraphed urging strongly that the blockade should not be so strict as to bring about any privation, but merely strict enough to show that we intended to have our own way.

"Yes, sir," I said on being told of this telegram, "but what *is* our own way? For what purpose is this blockade being imposed? If it is being imposed as a punishment for letting the Bulgarians into Fort Rupel, it is like sending a child to bed without its supper. Yet some time or other the child must get up again, and it looks as if the British and the French Governments have failed to provide for that eventuality. Why not take this opportunity of securing an ultimatum which if accepted will bring this muddle to an end? I know you are inclined to blame the French for their excitable improvisations of policy; but isn't British policy really to blame for them, or rather the absence of British policy? This blockade imposed without any notification of the reason for it and without any conditions for its removal is an unjust farce."

Sir Francis consulted with the other three Allied Ministers, and Count Bosdari at once dissociated himself from any demands they might propose to make on the grounds that Italy was not one of the three guaranteeing Powers. In taking this course Count Bosdari was logical, though whether logic so much as fear and dislike of Venizelos prompted his action may be doubted.

The consultation of the Ministers ended in the following suggestion for an ultimatum, fulfilment of the terms of which would put an end to the blockade: immediate demobilization of the Greek Army (to avert the possibility of martial law's being declared) and a measure of control over the Greek police. Prince Demidoff suggested that to this should be added the expulsion of German agents in Greece.

When Sir Francis Elliot told me of the suggested conditions

for the raising of the blockade, I asked him if I might make a criticism; and on his assenting I suggested that the really vital demand was for a new election.

"Surely, sir, in view of the unconstitutional dissolution of the Chamber last autumn and the protest against that unconstitutional dissolution which the Venizelists made by abstaining from voting at the new election, Great Britain, France, and Russia as the Powers guaranteeing the inviolableness of the Greek Constitution have the right to make such a demand. You yourself always get annoyed when the 'protecting' Powers are spoken of. Surely here is an opportunity to illustrate the force of the word 'guaranteeing.' You might suggest to Sir Edward Grey, if you thought fit, that we would abide by the result of a new election, which would follow of course a general demobilization. Even if you fail to convince Sir Edward Grey that the niceties of the French language cry out for a dissolution of this Chamber and a new election, he may be convinced by our willingness to accept the popular verdict and to cease from badgering Greece if that verdict went against Venizelos and the Entente. Of course, it would really be better to insist on reviving the constitutionally dissolved Chamber elected in June, 1915, but I suppose . . ."

"That would never be considered," Sir Francis interrupted, "but I believe you are right about the new election."

So after consultation with M. Guillemin and Prince Demidoff, Sir Francis Elliot telegraphed to the Foreign Office that if the Allied Governments had not yet decided for what reason they would lift the blockade, he suggested that they should demand as a condition of its being lifted general demobilization, the control of police, the dissolution of the Chamber, and a new election. The demand for the expulsion of German agents was dropped.

By this time I was dead beat, having been up for the greater

part of every night during the last week on account of the continual incidents which the police were provoking with our people. These had culminated in a Greek cavalry officer's attacking from behind Zanardi's younger brother with a drawn sword in Omonia Square. He had cut the brim of his hat off and inflicted a scalp wound.

The heat was terrific. The thermometer had already passed 100° in the shade, and it was still rising steadily. During the night of June 8th one of the worst attacks of pain I had ever known seized me. The next morning I was unable to move from bed. Later that day, being Friday, June 9th, Ricaud, in a state of much agitation, drove down to the house in Phaleron to say that M. Briand had telegraphed from London that there was complete disagreement between the French and British Governments over the course to be pursued in Greece. Ricaud inquired what demands for the ultimatum Sir Francis Elliot had suggested and told me that M. Guillemin had asked for the immediate dissolution of Parliament, general demobilization, the control of police, the control of customs, the arrest of suspects, and a new election to be held in a month's time, to which had been added a final proviso that if the present Government should secure a majority in the new election, the Allies would pledge themselves not to interfere with Greek opinion or Greek policy nor even attempt again to influence it.

I was too ill to get up and see the Minister myself. So I sent the car with an urgent message for Sells to come back in it at once to Phaleron. I was in a wild fume of anxiety lest Sir Francis should hear the news of M. Guillemin's additions from himself first of all, because I knew that would be the very thing to make him give way over the other clauses if the Foreign Office held out against the proposals of the Quai d'Orsay. However, nothing was known at the Legation of the French demands before Sells gave my information to the Minister. Sir Francis



Elliot was annoyed at first to learn that the French Minister had added demands of his own without consulting himself or Prince Demidoff, but luckily M. Guillemin was apologetic and said he had understood that Sir Francis had agreed to all these demands, or he should not have inserted them.

Finally, Sir Francis sent another telegram to the Foreign Office suggesting that we should at any rate insist firmly on the first three stipulations and include the final proviso about the new election.

To this telegram Sir Edward Grey replied that control of the police could not possibly be demanded, but that the Ministers in Athens were authorized to demand the dismissal of Captain Chrysospathi. What magic was it that made Captain Chrysospathi's personality the only concrete fact in Greece the Foreign Office seemed able to grasp? The telegram went on to say that no suggestion must be made for a successor to Captain Chrysospathi, because that would be an interference with the internal affairs of Greece.

In his reply Sir Francis Elliot ventured to point out a lack of logic in maintaining that it was not interference with the intimate affairs of a nation to demand the dismissal of a police officer and yet that it was interference to approve his successor.

Sir Edward Grey's telegram authorized demobilization as a second stipulation for the raising of the blockade, and as a third stipulation he authorized the demand of a guarantee from the Greek Government that martial law should not be proclaimed. Here was more lack of logic, and Sir Francis Elliot had to point out that the third stipulation must obviously be included in the second, since not even King Constantine could be expected to proclaim martial law without a mobilized army to put it into force. Any stipulations beyond those he had authorized, Sir Edward Grey's telegram concluded, could only be considered an unwarrantable interference with the internal affairs of Greece.

Demobilization and the dismissal of a police officer! To obtain these Greece was being blockaded.

The Greek Government by this time could make a good guess at the demands that were likely to be made upon them, and they proclaimed a partial demobilization, in doing which their inspired Press considered that they had administered a difficult check to Allied diplomacy. On being informed of this order for partial demobilization, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed instructions for Sir Francis Elliot to issue a proclamation to the Greek people in which it was to be pointed out that we wanted demobilization, that we did not want Greece to go to war, and that we had only sent troops to Salonica because Mr. Venizelos had invited us to send them there.

I can hardly hope to convey in print the agony of mind over what seemed such a cowardly betrayal of our friend that was now added to the physical agony I was already suffering.

This telegram from Sir Edward Grey created consternation in the British Legation, and Sir Francis Elliot telegraphed a strong protest against carrying out such instructions. On June 12th M. Briand telegraphed to M. Guillemin that the British Government had declined entirely to see his point of view, and that therefore he had felt obliged to give way. Ricaud came down to Phaleron in a state of profound depression and told me that de Roquefeuil intended to ask for both of them to be recalled.

Although I was still in abominable pain, I felt that I must rise from bed and go to Athens. I could not put my foot to the ground, but with the help of Moon I dressed and drove through the blazing heat to the Legation, where I asked to see the Minister at once. I then explained to him the French point of view and the French intentions. I cannot now remember all I said, but pain always clarifies the mind and I dare say my conviction was convincing. I can recall what an anodyne it was to hear Sir Francis agree that we could not surrender at this

juncture. I told him that the rumour had already gone round Athens that we were giving way because we could not afford to maintain the blockade after our losses in the North Sea. I showed him an announcement in one of the Government newspapers of that very morning that the Government was going to order the arrest of several Englishmen in Athens who were alleged to have been concerned in the bomb outrage at the Bulgarian Legation some weeks ago. I remember that this annoyed Sir Francis particularly, and that he sat down and wrote off to M. Skouloudis that if any employé of the British Legation were arrested he would immediately telegraph for the British Fleet. What was more, he telegraphed to Admiral de Robeck, who was in command for a few days more. The Admiral replied that the squadron was being got ready, but that he should like to have forty-eight hours if possible before being asked to sail.

I then begged Sir Francis to try the effect of another argument with Sir Edward Grey about the demand for a new election, and he sent a long telegram, pointing out once more that it was really impossible to argue that we were interfering with the internal affairs of Greece or attempting to direct her policy when we were simply asking for a dissolution and were prepared to accept the verdict of the Greek nation. He then told me to send a telegram to C and ask him to show it to the Foreign Office. The elation of feeling that we were going to make a fight for it defeated the worst of the pain. I was able to concentrate once more, and produced the following telegram:

June 12th, 1916.

*Rumours are flying round Athens that British Government has refused to support French demands. The general explanation is that we have lost more ships in North Sea battle than we admit and that we are afraid to risk either a continuation of blockade or naval demonstration. The effect of these rumours is sinister.*

*Last night police armed with rifles stopped all cars and carriages going out of Athens in order nominally to prevent flight of Venizelists. The Greek officer who was arrested for assaulting our agents has been released and has written a letter to the Press publicly accusing the British Legation of lying. A plot is being hatched by the police to arrest various Englishmen here on a charge of having been concerned in the farcical bomb outrage at the Bulgarian Legation.*

*When the news of the blockade was first announced, the Government intended to resign because they understood that the absence of any explanation implied that the Entente refused to acknowledge them any longer. King forbade them to resign and is known to have promised that blockade will soon finish because English and French are in disagreement. The most prominent officers of Greek General Staff and the Chief of Naval Staff have certainly been in secret colloquy with Chief German Agent and possibly with German strangers in Schenck's house who it is not rash to presume are German submarine officers. Prominent Venizelists say that if we give way now it means that Greek Government will proceed from one vexatious act to another, even possibly to a rupture of diplomatic relations. The unanimous demand is "Finish now ! Tell us what you want. The country is with you."*

*I must add that there is not the slightest hope of any popular rising or even demonstration in our favour unless we are ready to make a show of force. The people have been bullied into sulky acquiescence by terrorist methods of government ; they wish to be delivered but dare not express, except in secret, their desire.*

*Minister requests you will show this telegram to the Foreign Office.*

Simultaneously with this Sells sent a long telegram to the Admiralty, in which he urged that the situation was becoming critical.

## GREEK MEMORIES

About half-past six Sir Francis Elliot and Prince Demidoff drove off together to Cephissia, the summer resort of fashion some ten miles out of Athens.

On reconsidering the telegram I had drafted I felt that it lacked a final and convincing argument, and it occurred to me that if an act of violence could be committed against a fairly prominent individual such an act might be the spur to prick the Foreign Office into firmness. The only person I could think of was myself. If to-night on my way back to Phaleron I could be shot at and wounded, that would probably clinch matters. It would be an unpleasant business for myself; but if I were shot through the forearm it would certainly be a good deal less painful than the agony of acute sciatica in this heat. Robertson would be driving me, and I could rely on his nerve. Could I rely on the accurate eye and sureness of aim of the man I had in mind to entrust with this 'outrage'? I did not feel that it would be playing the game to provoke an ultimatum by merely having a few shots fired at the car as it drove along between the false-pepper trees of the long Phaleron road. That would be easy enough for the most ordinary pistol shot. Still, it would not be playing the game. If on the other hand I received a bullet in the arm, not only would the 'outrage' be more convincing, but I should have the moral satisfaction of feeling that I had done all I could to justify such a provocative action. The shooting of a pistol or a revolver at a man in a passing car certainly did contain an element of risk for the man who was being shot at. A rifle would be safer, but then it would be difficult to post a man with a rifle without his being observed.

Meditation on the pain that a bullet wound would cause drove the pain in my leg right away. I was just going to ring the bell for Robertson with a feeling of delicious freedom when Tucker came in, all goggling, to say that a mob had smashed the offices of the *Patris* newspaper and was now wrecking the

*Ethnos* building. I hurried through to the front office, threw open the windows, and listened to the dull roar of the mob in the direction of Stadium Street.

"This is absolutely splendid, Tucker," I exclaimed.

"Splendid, Captain Z?" he echoed in perplexity. "But suppose they attack the Legation?"

"I jolly well hope they will," I said. "Perhaps we shall hear less about interfering with the internal affairs of Greece if they do. Hark! They're coming much nearer."

At this moment a white-faced agent came in breathlessly to say that the mob had broken up the offices of the *Astir* and were on their way to smash up the *Nea Hellas*. The noise of the mob was now much louder, and when they reached the corner of Dragatzani Street some of the rioters turned aside and came hurrying along toward the Legation.

"Put up the shutters," somebody shouted. But I said:

"No, put out the lights. I want to see what they're going to do."

About fifty disreputable vagabonds stopped outside the Legation and booed for a few minutes, after which they went on to overtake their companions and help to smash up the *Nea Hellas* offices.

As soon as they moved off I sent a car at full speed to Cephissia with a message to tell Sir Francis Elliot what was going on in Athens, leaving it for him to take what action he thought best.

It must have been now about half-past seven. I was getting into the Sunbeam to drive round the city myself when there was a sound of firing, and I was persuaded not to go out for the present. I cannot remember that I ever felt happier in my life than while I sat there in the Annexe, listening at the window to those sounds of riot and destruction that were to my ears as musical as the song of nightingales. All this must persuade the Foreign Office to agree to the stipulations in the ultimatum we

had asked for. And I should not have to be shot through the arm now for the sake of argument.

While I was waiting for an opportunity to walk across to the Hotel d'Athènes for dinner I worked at my proposals for passport control, and at half-past eight I left the Annexe with Tucker. We had no sooner arrived at the restaurant than the mob came along to wreck the *Hestia* building which was opposite. Unfortunately I could not get out in time to see what was going on before the landlady in loud hysterics had closed all the shutters and locked the door. However, we got hold of the key at last and were outside in time to see the mob escorted off by a policeman in uniform who was apparently in charge of the proceedings. The wide asphalt road was strewn with rocks. So it was evident that the demonstrators had been provided with missiles beforehand. I recognized a pestilential bravo of Gounaris as the apparent leader of this demonstration. Then we finished our dinner quickly and drove round in the Sunbeam to see what damage had been done in the city.

Outside the building of the *Nea Hellas* in Kolokotroni Square there was a cordon of police and soldiers three deep, and the road was strewn with broken glass, every window having been smashed. I thought I would see if I could induce the police to arrest Tucker and myself. So I told Robertson to drive through the cordon. This we did four times. It annoyed the police and military, but they would not take any action.

When we returned to the Legation I found Sir Francis Elliot, who had arrived from Cephissia. I invited him to come and look at the damage, and we drove him through the cordon twice. After this he went back to the Chancery and sent off a rousing telegram to the Foreign Office *en clair*. I thought no harm would be done by stirring up things a little more at home, so after taking a certain amount of evidence I sent off the following telegram:

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June 12th, 1916.

*Very Urgent*

*Mob hired by Government has wrecked Patris office. An attack on the Legation is expected hourly. Later Hestia and Nea Hellas attacked. Mob hooted Englishman outside Grande Bretagne but have only mildly demonstrated before Legation. Police ordered not to interfere with any rioters. Situation very critical for all foreigners, entirely due to rumours of British weakness.*

After sending this telegram off I received a significant report from a source I was tapping in the innermost councils of the Government party.

June 12th, 1916.

*Very Urgent*

*I have absolutely reliable information that Dousmanis said to important Staff Officer this afternoon that a Royal dictatorship is immediately necessary as he had advised.*

After getting these telegrams enciphered and dispatched I sent orders to every one of our accredited agents to go out and watch the enemy Legations. An hour or so later I drove round with Talbot and Bonaparte on a tour of inspection, for I felt it was imperative in view of the rumour of our nervousness to show that we were not in the least nervous. In spite of the fact that the mob hired by the Government was supposed to represent popular feeling in Athens there were no police on guard round the French or the Russian Legation; but there were thirty police round the Bulgarian Legation and thirty more round the Austrian Legation. As we drew near the German Legation the four agents I had given the job of watching it arrived. When they reached the door, a number of police hidden in the gardens of the houses opposite sprang out and



attacked our men with drawn bayonets. I jumped out of the car and seized a sergeant by the scruff of the neck, whereupon he drew his bayonet and was apparently going to jab me when his men protested, and he put it back. Presently I recognized one of the most notorious secret agents of the enemy and told Bonaparte to seize him.

"Skipper," Bonaparte protested in his deepest accents, "this is going to be hot. I understand what they're saying, Skipper, and it's not only what they're going to do to you, but what they're going to do to the Minister as well. Skipper, it's hot. Very hot."

"Never mind what they're going to do," I told Bonaparte. "You collar that chap, and tell this sergeant that if he doesn't order his men to release our agents at once, I'll take him with me into the car if I have to drag him into it myself and drive him to the police station and make them give me his name there."

On Bonaparte delivering this threat one of the plain-clothes men rushed off to a neighbouring barracks for assistance. Presently about thirty more knock-kneed and sleepy police arrived on the scene. By this time the others had released my men, and unwilling though I was to let the sergeant get off without giving his name I decided that we should have a better case if I did not press matters to further violence. So our men were ordered to go round to the Annexe and write out their report on the encounter. That report, which is as usual characterized by extreme moral sensitiveness, makes amusing reading:

June 13th, 1916.

We were passing in front of Pesmadjoglou's Buildings on the Cephissia Road when all at once, just near the German Legation, we were surrounded by secret police agents and by gendarmes who, addressing us with the most vulgar expressions, told us that it was forbidden to pass from there. On our answer that

we were not malefactors, they started insulting us and cursing, they got hold of us from the back, threatening to beat us. We told them that we belonged to the British Intelligence and that they had no right to arrest us, but on hearing this, they rushed on us like mad, and some of them drawing their bayonets, started, together with the others, beating us and blaspheming England, the Legation, and all the Allies. They used such filthy vocabulary that I cannot allow myself to repeat it. We tried to resist, but they were so numerous that we were overwhelmed and with kicks and blows they were pushing us to the police station.

Fortunately we saw at the moment our Service motor-car passing and shouted for help. The car stopped and, for our good fortune, Captain Mackenzie and Mr. Bonaparte jumped out; as soon as they approached us, the secret agents as well as the gendarmes let us free, but when the sergeant who was at their head was asked the reason for our arrest, he answered wildly: "We don't recognize you," adding a lot of curses to our address. On Captain Mackenzie's demand for the name of the sergeant, he impertinently refused to give it, stating that he had no account to render to anybody. One of the men had again drawn his bayonet against Captain Mackenzie, but one of the soldiers standing by caught his hand and reminded him that this would mean trouble, whereupon the gendarme replaced it into its sheath.

What we suffered morally in the meanwhile is more than we can report, as besides the barbarous behaviour and the blows we had received, the language used toward us and toward the English nation was so vile and so vulgar that any conscience would revolt.

On Tuesday morning, the 13th, a telegram arrived from Sir Edward Grey to say that he must insist on the publication of his announcement that it was Mr. Venizelos who had invited the Allied troops to land at Salonica.

I have already written in *Athenian Memories* a full account of the circumstances in which Allied troops were sent to Salonica. Anybody who has read that account will be able to understand

the mental and moral effect on us in Athens of Sir Edward Grey's capacity for self-deception. I call it self-deception; but of course it is really an example of Whig mentality. Sir Francis Elliot, whose mind was impermeable to that watery influence of Whiggery, fell into an exasperated gloom on receiving this telegram. I was under the impression, as I watched his thin nose twitching angrily at the folio sheet of blue Chancery paper on which the abhorred instructions were typed, that he was contemplating putting an end to his diplomatic career by asking to be recalled rather than be the mouthpiece of such Whiggish self-righteousness.

When I returned to the Annexe I found de Roquefeuil marching round and round my desk and waving the paraphrase of another telegram. This was from M. Briand to say that, in spite of every argument he had brought to bear in London, Sir Edward Grey absolutely declined to yield. Therefore he was instructing M. Guillemin to associate himself with the British Minister in the announcement that the Allies had been invited by Mr. Venizelos to Salonica.

"There is only one thing you can do, Captain de Roquefeuil."

"And what is that?" he demanded excitedly. "What can I do? I am treated here like an idiot."

"You can always ask to be recalled," I reminded him. "And what is more, you can say to M. Guillemin that any man with a sense of honour or of logic would rather end his career than betray such a devoted friend of the Entente as Mr. Venizelos."

"My friend, you are perfectly right."

With this the French Naval Attaché rushed out of my office, jumped into his car, and drove at full speed to his Legation, where I was informed he rushed into M. Guillemin's study and told him that he must telegraph his wish to be recalled at once rather than be party to such a shameful piece of diplomacy as the proposed sacrifice of Mr. Venizelos. The excitement of de

Roquefeuil communicated itself to the French Minister, who immediately put on his hat and drove round with his Naval Attaché to the British Legation, where he told Sir Francis Elliot that he had decided to ask for his recall rather than put his name to the announcement about Venizelos. Sir Francis suggested that, before committing themselves to the grave step of asking to be recalled, M. Guillemin should wait for the effect on Sir Edward Grey of the *en clair* telegram he had dispatched late last night. Finally it was resolved, Prince Demidoff concurring, that on their own responsibility they should postpone for twenty-four hours any united *démarche* to the Greek Government.

I remember Bridgeman's advising me to prepare for a disappointment.

"I know the Foreign Office," he said. "And you'd better not count on their giving way. In fact, you'd better make up your mind that they won't."

It began to look as if Bridgeman's pessimism was right when, later in the day, there was still no reply from the Foreign Office. However, the three Ministers telegraphed another protest against the proposed announcement, and to this in postscript was added an appeal from Mr. Venizelos to the personal loyalty and the political honesty of Sir Edward Grey.

The text of Prince Demidoff's telegram to Petrograd on June 14th can be found in the Russian White Book published by the Bolsheviks in 1922, and it may be observed that Prince Demidoff was himself by no means friendly toward Venizelos:

"The note as it stands does not serve any useful purpose; it is not only too moderate, but also, very harmful. . . . We offer, without any necessity at all, a weapon against Mr. Venizelos to the present Government which is very hostile to us and which, at the present moment, awaits our sentence trembling. . . . For all these reasons we have decided, by common accord, not to hand to Greece this note detrimental

to the Entente's interests and to ask you for new instructions. The Greek Government terrified, the Venizelists with feverish delight are waiting your energetic intervention. It would be an immense error if we allowed the former to come back to life and if we discouraged the latter. Could not your Excellency intervene with the British Government to persuade them to follow a more energetic policy in the present circumstances ? ”

Prince Nicolas of Greece in his *Political Memories* deduced from this telegram that the Note was inspired and its terms elaborated by Mr. Venizelos. In this hasty theory he has been followed by the credulous and uncritical Sir Basil Thomson.

On June 14th a long telegram arrived from the Foreign Office which replied in detail to the telegram I had sent to London two days previously. In view of the fact that eager apologists like Sir Basil Thomson have suggested that deliberately false information was supplied by myself, it might be as well to say here that the single not fully substantiated statement in that telegram was the use of Schenck's house as a rendezvous for submarine officers. That, however, was not what stirred the Foreign Office in my telegram. As I had anticipated, what really did shock them was the news that a Greek officer had publicly accused the British Legation of lying. The name of this officer was Orogas. It was he who attacked and wounded with his sword Zanardi's brother in Omonia Square. He had been arrested; but on being immediately released he had published an insulting letter in the Press. Later on when the new Government came into power I sent Zanardi down to identify him again, and he was re-arrested in the presence of about fifty of his brother officers. Sir Basil Thomson states \* that my information about the attempt to implicate us in the bomb outrage at the Bulgarian Legation was an invention of de Roquefeuil's; but de Roquefeuil had nothing to do with it. The announcement

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 112.

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was printed in one of the Government organs. Sir Basil Thomson says further that the street demonstrations and the breaking up of the offices of Venizelist newspapers were arranged by de Roquefeuil. This is an equally stupid and false assertion. The mob was escorted by police, and the leaders were recognized as bravos of the Government, at least one of whom I was able to identify myself.

That morning Sir Edward Grey interviewed Mr. Gennadius, the Greek Minister in London, and probably Mr. Gennadius argued with Sir Edward Grey on much the same lines as he was being argued with from Athens. Anyway, that afternoon another telegram arrived from him, telling Sir Francis Elliot that he supposed he and the other Entente Ministers would have to do as they thought best, but that he considered the demand for the dissolution of the Chamber an unprecedented measure. Once more Sir Francis tried to impress upon him the strictly constitutional justification for such a demand and emphasized our promise to abide by the result of the new elections. I am under the impression that Erskine was home on leave at this date and that he was able to support at the Foreign Office our point of view in Athens.

When the French heard of the effect of my telegram in London they asked for a paraphrase of it, and at once sent off an identical telegram to M. Briand and Admiral Lacaze. It seemed to have the same effect in Paris, for on Friday, June 16th, a demonstration of the French and English Fleet was agreed to. I have as a souvenir of that decision a hasty note on half a sheet of paper scrawled by Ricaud:

*Athènes.*

16/6/16.

*Mon cher Mackenzie:*

*Conformément aux décisions prises par les Ministres, nous télégraphions pour demander au Général Sarrail d'envoyer*

12,000 hommes, moitié Français, moitié Anglais, en vue d'un débarquement éventuel au Phalère.

*Savez-vous si la Legation d'Angleterre a télégraphié de son côté au général anglais de Salomique ?*

*Ce serait urgent.*

*Cordialement à vous,*

*Ricaud*

After having had so much difficulty in persuading the British Government to take a firm line, we were now all on tenterhooks lest the Greek Government should resign before the Note was handed in.

The first arrangement was to present the Note at nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, June 20th, to coincide with the arrival of six battleships, twelve destroyers, two monitors, six cruisers, and mine-sweepers, and the flying-ship *Ark Royal*. The Allied Ministers were now informed that it was impossible for the Fleet to arrive before Wednesday, and the delivery of the Note was postponed until then. At six o'clock the mine-sweepers were to arrive at Salamis, at eight o'clock eight of the smaller craft were to arrive at Salamis, at nine o'clock the battleships were to arrive at Salamis, and at half-past eleven troopships with two brigades, a regiment of cavalry, and two field guns were to reach the Piræus. The Note was to be presented at nine o'clock when the battleships were due. The ships were to fly the Greek flag at the foretop linked with the Tricolour or the White Ensign as the case might be. Massed bands were to land at the Piræus playing the Greek National Anthem and the *Marseillaise*, but not *God save the King*. Two hydroplanes were to scatter sixty thousand copies of a proclamation to the Greek people.

The French in Athens were in a state of terrific excitement over the arrival of the Fleet, for they planned to cut the tele-

phone wires between Tatōi and Athens as soon as it was sighted in the hope of persuading the King to bolt in a panic to Larissa, where General Sarrail, with five squadrons of cavalry, was to arrest him and whence he was to be deported to Morocco. When de Roquefeuil and Ricaud confided in me these projects I had great difficulty in keeping a straight face and, even to this day, I laugh aloud when I recall their voices as they unfolded this operatic finale. However, I knew if I started to argue against the cutting of the telephone wires between Athens and Tatōi that would be the surest way of making them do it. So I applauded the scheme without a smile and suggested that, as they were likely to be fully occupied on the great morning, it would be as well if our service were entrusted with the carrying out of this operation. They were perfectly willing to hand over the telephone wires to us, and I felt sure I should be able to postpone the operation until they had forgotten all about it. That was always my method in dealing with the French, to agree with them as one agrees with children and then to create endless difficulties in carrying out their scheme until they grew tired of it and wanted another.

The week-end before the Fleet arrived was filled with discussions about the best place for it to anchor. Everybody except Sells and myself argued in favour of Phaleron rather than Salamis. Sells pointed out that it would take three days to net Phaleron against submarines and only two hours to net Salamis. We both of us realized that as a dramatic effect Phaleron was obviously the best place for a demonstration; but, as we pointed out, the dramatic effect of Phaleron would flop badly if three of our largest battleships were torpedoed in full view of the Greek population. In an anxiety to acquit the Royalist Greeks of the charge of co-operating with the German and Austrian submarines, their apologists seem inclined to suggest that submarines in the Ægean were as rare as sea-serpents. They forget that



all this while Allied ships were being sunk in Greek waters. Admiral Dartige du Fournet, in his eagerness to put the blame of his own fatuous behaviour in November 1916 on his personal enemy, de Roquefeuil, mentions in his book \* that he was always receiving false reports about submarines from the French Intelligence. No one knows better than myself how absurdly uncritical the French reports were; but Sells and I never sent in reports about submarines without satisfying ourselves that they were genuine. Out of some two thousand received during 1916 I doubt if the Vice-Admiral at Mudros was bothered fifty times with telegrams that invited investigation.

On two occasions after the Otto Görner fiasco I led cutting-out expeditions when the information looked good enough, once to Marathon and once to Raphina. On each occasion we only missed the submarines by an hour or two. We could not, of course, hope without an armed craft to do more than capture the boat's crews when they landed; but even that would have bucked us up.

Sells was in the favourable position of being able to enlist the help of the British Naval Mission when he wanted to check assertions, and by the date of which I am writing I would claim that the three most sceptical Intelligence officers in the Mediterranean over submarine reports were Sells, Hill, and myself.

During this month of June we established without any doubt the fact that enemy submarines were being sighted two or three times a day within five miles of the Piræus, and we had the strongest reasons to suppose that officers of the Greek General Staff were in consultation with those in Athens who were in a position to communicate with enemy submarines. The Lestage case alone is sufficient proof that the German Naval Attaché was in a position to communicate with his brother officers in U-boats.

The final argument which Sells and I used against Phaleron

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral.*

as a suitable venue for the Fleet was the difficulty of finding water and provisions there, and the comparative facilities at the Piræus. At last Sells managed to convince everybody that Salamis was the proper place, and any doubts left were removed by a telegram from the French Admiral to say that nothing would induce him to come to Phaleron and that he insisted on going to Salamis.

On Tuesday, the 20th, what we had feared would happen happened. The Government resigned, and a destroyer was sent to Ægina to fetch Mr. Zaïmis, whose regular rôle in Greek politics was to form a temporary Government and tide over an awkward period.

When the news of the resignation arrived, Sir Francis Elliot was away with Sells and Admiral de Robeck who was on his way down from Mudros, bound for his new command in the Grand Fleet, and they were not expected back until the afternoon. Talbot and I drove down to Phaleron and arrived there just as they were coming ashore. The question now was whether to send in the Note at once without waiting for the arrival of the Fleet, or whether to carry out the original programme and present the Note at nine o'clock next morning as arranged. Talbot was strongly in favour of handing it in at once, because he feared a *coup d'état* that night by the Royalist Party, and the seizure of prominent Venizelists as hostages. There was, however, no indication of any immediate *coup d'état*, and de Roquefeuil, who had set his heart on the arrival of the Fleet with the outward evidence it would offer of France's glory and might, argued strongly in favour of adhering to the original time-table. I saw advantages and disadvantages on both sides. Moreover, I was nervous of giving positive assurances that there would be no violent action by the Royalists, though I added that so far as I could be sure of anything I felt sure that there would not be.

In the end it was decided to pay no attention to the resignation of the Government which had not been officially announced, and to present the Note at nine o'clock the following morning. The next complication was a message from the French Admiral that the Fleet could not arrive until Thursday. So at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning the Note was not presented as intended. Two hours later a telegram came from Paris that the Fleet was not coming until Friday afternoon, but that the Note was to be presented at once in order to give the King forty-eight hours' grace to consider it. A telegram was immediately sent to the French Admiral, urging that the delay in the arrival of the Fleet might cause serious trouble in Athens. This telegram pointed out further that in presenting the Note the Entente Ministers had accepted a heavy responsibility, and that a Note of such uncompromising character could not be effective without a tangible proof of the seriousness of our intentions.

It now began to look as if the Note would be cancelled altogether if it were not hastily sent in. So, praying for the best and wondering whether it would mean the end of their diplomatic careers, the Ministers of the Entente decided to hand in the Note at one o'clock. This was done by M. Guillemin and Sir Francis Elliot, and at the same time Prince Demidoff drove out to Tatöi to inform the King of its contents. At two o'clock the Note came back with the intimation that since there was no Government there was nobody to accept the Note. Having acquainted the King with the contents of the Note, the Entente Ministers could not see their way to admit the non-existence of a Government, and the Note was returned with an intimation that another rejection might have serious consequences. The Note did not return again.

When the King read the Note, he told Prince Demidoff that the demand for new elections was incomprehensible, because

the country would certainly vote for him and not for Venizelos. It was pointed out to him that in that case he could have no objection to the Note, because the Entente was pledged by the terms of it to accept the verdict of the Greek people, and promised if that verdict went against Venizelos to abstain from any further interference with Greek affairs. The King went on to say that if he had joined the Germans he could have thrown Sarrail into the sea, though he admitted that in that case his coast towns would have been destroyed. He spoke with particular bitterness of the French, and he accused the British Minister of making too much of the anti-Entente demonstrations on June 12th. However, what did please him was that with the break-up of the German organization the disappearance of the French and British Intelligence Services might be expected. The King went on to say that he could not guarantee the life of Venizelos, on which the Russian Minister pointed out that he might be held responsible for his safety, and that covert threat seemed to impress him.

Athens remained quiet during the afternoon. At five o'clock the first paper appeared with the text of the Note, and simultaneously some fifty thousand copies of it were distributed amongst the population. Yet, in spite of the outward calm it was an anxious time while we were waiting to know what was going to happen. As soon as Prince Demidoff left Tatōi the King telephoned an order that every soldier in Athens was to return to barracks at once and stand by fully equipped for active service at eight o'clock.

At six o'clock I saw half a battalion in full equipment moving down with machine guns toward the Piræus, and I began to think that the efforts of the military party to persuade the King to refuse the ultimatum had been successful. As dusk fell more troops were heard moving, and at seven o'clock a telegram came from the French Admiral to say that the French troops had

been ordered back to Salonica in order to give the King his forty-eight hours for reflection.

The heat was intense. The thermometer had risen at one time during the day to 109° in the shade. Even now after sundown it was well over 90°. I had sent most of my staff home with strict orders to remain indoors, and the tramp of soldiers marching down toward the Piræus began to play upon my nerves. I reflected that I had staked everything on non-resistance, and I began to wonder if my judgment had not been wrong after all. In the present state of tension and in this ghastly heat the smallest incident might provoke a massacre. I knew that some of the more bitter of the anti-Ententists had stored grenades in various rooms along the main streets of the city. I knew that even convicts had been released for violence and that desperadoes had been imported into Athens from the neighbouring districts. The most trivial incident might lead to the most horrible street fighting and worse. Much might depend on obedience to my orders, and I hoped fervidly that they were being obeyed by keeping indoors.

Presently Tucker came in to say that the men upstairs were getting nervous and asked if I would mind sending the car down to Phaleron where the *Valkyrie* was lying and borrowing the five Turkish Mausers which Rogers had on board.

"The men upstairs would feel much happier if they were armed," he urged.

"A damned lot of good five Mauser rifles will do if the other side really means business," I observed.

"It's not that," said Tucker deprecatingly, "it's the idea of the thing. They're walking about like a lot of cats on hot bricks. They say they don't mind staying here to-night so long as they have arms, but honestly, Captain Z, I believe the men will bolt if you keep them here without them."

The last thing I wanted was for any of our people to leave

the Annexe just now, so finally I decided to send Robertson down with the car to fetch the rifles.

"But the cartridges will remain locked up in my safe until they are really wanted," I warned Tucker.

I rang through to the Legation and asked Sir Francis if there was any news yet; but there was nothing. He had sent everybody off, and was going to wait there by himself.

At eight o'clock Robertson returned with the rifles, and I was just locking the cartridges up in my safe when Tucker came into my room to say that a car had stopped in front of the Legation. I went across to the front office, and looked out of the open window. The tramp of feet had ceased.

In about a quarter of an hour Sir Francis came into my room, a flush on his pale cheeks, a brightness in his eyes.

"It's all right," he exclaimed, waving a paper, "they've accepted everything."

"And now we must win this election, sir," I said.

"Well, I shall leave your great mind to work out a scheme for doing that; I'm going home to dinner."

I have the picture of him that night clear in my memory, of his grey flannel suit and his straw Homburg hat and the fine elation in his step as he hurried away.

As for me, I went to the Opera after dinner and heard—was it *Norma* or *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*? At about eleven o'clock, while we were cooling ourselves outside the theatre in the last entracte, there was a tremendous bang from the direction of the sea.

"My god," I exclaimed, "don't tell me the Fleet has arrived after all, and is starting to bombard Athens under the impression that the ultimatum has been refused."

What I said as a joke the inhabitants of Athens seemed to believe in earnest. Public places emptied like magic, and everybody who remained began to shout "*Vive l'Entente*," as if he

could thereby propitiate the next shot. We found out afterwards that the noise came from a powder factory in the Vale of Daphne, which had blown up owing to the heat. It was a perfect operatic curtain to a most successful performance, and it certainly had the effect of calming even the most bellicose Royalists.

At midnight three German officers were reported to have arrived after an expensive and hazardous journey via Tepelin to inform Mr. Skouloudis and the King that Germany was prepared to help Greece, even to the extent of guaranteeing supplies of ammunition. Early next morning two of them went back the way they had come. The third, Major von Schweinitz, remained.

The atmosphere of relief was extraordinary. Cards of congratulation were being left all next day at the Legation. As for myself, I could not ask for a cup of coffee without every waiter in the place rushing to serve me, and for the first time since I had been in Athens, the secretary of the Grande Bretagne Hotel took his hat off to me when I came into lunch. The only people disappointed were the French. Their massed bands playing the *Marseillaise* and the Greek National Anthem, their interlinked flags, their deportation of the King to Morocco, all these delicious treats were lost by the prompt acceptance of the Note.

Ricaud was the first to recover his spirits, for he had at least the pleasure in partnership with myself of proscribing the Greek secret police. On June 26th I was able to send the following telegram to Alexandria:

*M. Zaimis has proposed meeting to-morrow of self and French colleague with Colonel Zymbrakakis, the restored Chief of Police. We intend :*

- (i) *To recapitulate with evidence misdeeds of late Government as they affect us.*

## JUNE

- (ii) *To proscribe all the secret police.*
- (iii) *To suggest with deference but quite positively certain names to replace these.*
- (iv) *To point out that our attitude will only be aggressive when provoked, and*
- (v) *That in future we shall reserve to ourselves the right to make formal complaints, observing that if our complaints are not noticed we shall be compelled to exercise unusual caution in sanctioning the departure of travellers from Greece and*
- (vi) *That we shall regard persecution of friendly Greeks as attempts to evade the obligations of benevolence accepted by new régime.*
- (vii) *To demand list of all new Police Agents with photographs.*
- (viii) *To observe that we shall not accept ignorance or military necessity as excuse for persecution.*
- (ix) *To announce that on receiving tangible proofs of new attitude, we shall in every way try to help the convenience of the Greeks.*

*In order that the last proposal may on our side bear fruit I hope that Egyptian authorities will afford us every assistance by the promptitude and reasonableness with which they will deal with demobilized Greeks anxious to return. I also hope that when I make a strong recommendation for the release of an individual I shall be guaranteed official support to the extent at any rate of paying attention to the equity of the case.*

This telegram caused acute excitement in the Bureau at Alexandria, and an urgent telegram was sent back to me, asking if the Minister knew that I was interviewing the Chief of Police.

Yet one must beware of laughing at Alexandria, for there



was not in London a much profounder appreciation of the state of affairs in Greece.

## AFTER THE NOTE

"The importance of the Note, both from the national and international angles, is apparent. But from the point of view of Venizelos, it is of extraordinary personal interest. By the Note, England, France, and Russia accept his contentions on the Constitutional abuses; they recognize that 'the free exercise of universal suffrage' has been 'impeded', that 'the Chamber has been dissolved for the second time in less than a year in spite of the definitely expressed will of the people', and that 'the electors have been convoked at a time of complete mobilization, so that the existing Chamber only represents a fractional part of the electorate.' All these conditions were already notorious throughout Europe, but by referring to them formally the Allies add recognition to the declarations of the Greek leader. Although friendly toward the Greek leader, the Allies rarely volunteered him such full support."

Thus comments Mr. S. B. Chester,\* and it is a just comment.

This was the point at which Great Britain could have stepped forward and taken the lead in Greece. The most elementary attempt to appreciate the realities of the situation out there would have enabled statesmen of even less imagination and experience than those who found themselves at the head of affairs to take the lead. It may be granted that Sir Edward Grey was as usual hampered by the pessimism of his military advisers about everything except their own grandiose and bloody offensives on the Western Front; but, unless he was prepared to support Venizelos both with the moral and material assistance of Great Britain, he should never have allowed himself to be rushed by Sir Francis Elliot into approving the terms of the Note of June 21st. He should have made it clear by recalling Sir Francis Elliot and

\* *Life of Venizelos*, by S. B. Chester (Constable), p. 283.

everybody connected with the British Legation that he had other ideas than those he allowed it to be supposed he shared with France and Russia. This is no question of asking a man to be wise after the event. He was advised by the Minister on the spot that if a certain course were taken a certain result would be achieved. The Note was presented in spite of the muddle made by the Fleet in not being ready at the right moment. The risk was taken in Athens of what might even have been a massacre. The Note was accepted amid every sign of popular approval. Sir Francis Elliot then received the congratulations of the Foreign Office on his diplomacy, and with that the British Government seemed to consider its interest in the Greek situation at an end.

It is clear from what Mr. Chester says that the crux of the Note was the demand for a new election. So much was this demand in the interest of Mr. Venizelos that his enemies, and these include English writers like Sir Basil Thomson and Mr. G. F. Abbot, as well as harlequin American journalists like Paxton Hibben, have asserted that Mr. Venizelos himself was the inspirer of the Note. I can affirm that not a word was said by any of the Allied Ministers about a new election until I pointed out to Sir Francis Elliot that this was the only logical demand which could be made by the *puissances garantes*. It was because I believed that the result of such an election would justify the shilly-shallying of two years over Greek affairs that I was ready to do anything to obtain the insertion of this demand. The dismissal of hostile police agents would have been far too trivial a matter over which to burn so much good coal in bringing the fleet to Salamis. Sir Francis himself fully appreciated the vital importance of that election, for when he received the congratulations of the Foreign Office on his success he telegraphed back that it was premature to speak of success until the new election had been won.

## GREEK MEMORIES

On June 26th with his approval I telegraphed to London in answer to an inquiry from C about the effect of the situation in Greece on the work of the Intelligence Department:

*Principal effect is to give our work a still more official character. This of course is greatly to the advantage of our secret activities. Myself and French colleague will at request of M. Zaimis interview Colonel Zymbrakakis, new Chief of Police, to-morrow. We shall ask for dismissal of all the old police agents and complete cognizance of all the new ones appointed. It will be necessary if our control of the Police is to be actual as well as theoretical that a special grant from the Secret Vote be telegraphed enabling me at once to supplement the salaries of the new secret police otherwise they will either be bought by the Germans or entirely run by the French and we shall have great difficulties in doing our work satisfactorily especially up to and during the Election. The monthly allowance of my French colleague has been doubled and is now £6,000. The Minister will strongly support me when I say that it is most necessary to keep well informed of French plans. This I have always been able to do partly from personal relationship, partly from a very carefully organized inner Intelligence. It is probable that the French method of handling the election may defeat our common object, but as long as I am equipped to have the necessary knowledge beforehand of their intentions, I can always by personal efforts neutralize any extravagance. A second point is that I have the gravest suspicions of certain Italian manoeuvres here and I must be in a position to check them by previous knowledge. I therefore earnestly submit the desirability of allotting a monthly sum of at least Fcs. 50,000 which is the least I can ask for as oil for the new machine. The French have just given Venizelos two million francs. Another most important point in present situation is that H.B.M.'s Government should impress on Egyptian authorities the necessity of exercising promptitude, common sense, and equity in dealing with*

*the desire of very many demobilized Greeks to return quickly to Egypt.*

This telegram was understood by the Foreign Office to be a suggestion for wholesale bribery. Sir Francis Elliot received a shocked remonstrance for supposing that H.M.'s Government would ever dream of using money to influence an election, and my request for extra money was refused. I was under no illusion about the severity of the electoral struggle. Within two days of the acceptance of the Note I had sent the following telegram:

*The situation is everywhere promising and the general satisfaction remains undiminished. At the same time it is certain that Germans and Gounarists will make desperate efforts to keep Venizelos out, and too easy satisfaction should not allow us to relax the efforts still required to perfect what has been so well begun.*

One of the best omens of the honest intentions of the new Government was the resignation of Admiral Coundouriotis from the Ministry of Marine, for this great patriot had only consented to hold office in the Skouloudis administration in order that he might keep the Navy from being involved in the actions of that Government. Those who fling malevolent accusations of personal ambition against Venizelos forget that associated intimately with him in the struggle for the honour and glory and grandeur of Greece were Admiral Coundouriotis and that great little man, General Danglis, both heroes of the Balkan wars which preceded the war of 1914.

On June 26th I was informed by a person present at a conference held between the Gounarist Greek deputies and the Turkish deputies of Macedonia that the Turkish Legation in Athens had been asked to press for troops to be sent from Turkey to Xanthi with the object of crossing the Greek frontier and

raising trouble locally in order to spoil the efforts of Venizelist candidates at the forthcoming elections. We were able to check this information and establish its authenticity. Indeed, a day or two later we were able to name the Turk who was at the head of this anti-Venizelist propaganda at Salonica, and even to send copies of his telegrams, signed with a pseudonym, naming the sums of money that would be required. These telegrams had been sent to the heads of the Gounarist party in Athens, and also to the Turkish Legation.

Simultaneously with this plot we discovered a plot in Athens to proclaim a military dictatorship and, after satisfying Sir Francis that the evidence we had was conclusive, he authorized me to send the following telegram to London:

*The situation here continues satisfactory, but there are indications of possible disorder. It was from the first considered surprising that the military party should give way so easily to the demands of the guaranteeing Powers and many prominent Venizelists expressed an opinion that such a swift surrender should put us more than ever on our guard. This vague fear has developed into something more tangible by the discovery of a military plot to achieve a coup d'état and proclaim an absolute monarchy or in other words a military dictatorship. I have reports from unimpeachable sources of some of the details and personages involved. These supplemented by observations from my agents cannot be overlooked as an element of uncertainty in the political situation. The hotheads of the military party wish suddenly to cut off the King from all communication with his advisers and proclaim the state in danger. An attack would be made on the prominent Venizelists and on certain foreigners who are considered to have helped to overthrow the late Government. Anything is possible in the Balkans and without wishing to be pessimistic I think the possibility during these next few weeks of a militant outbreak must never be overlooked. The*

*King's remark to the Russian Minister about attempts on the life of Venizelos was significant. Eighty-three officers held a meeting in a field at midnight on Sunday and a resolution was passed to support their superiors. The easiest way to check the growth of this conspiracy would be to demand the replacement of General Dousmanis by General Danglis and to oppose most strictly the nomination to be Commandant de la Place of any but a Venizelist. It is rumoured that Colonel Constantinopoulos will be replaced by Colonel Polymenakos or Courevelis. All three are chiefs of the conspiracy. The right man would be Colonel Brandounas. The Minister instructed me to communicate this way to you directly and has telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey referring him to you for fuller information. In the interview which I shall have to-morrow with Colonel Zymbrakakis, the new Chief of Police, I shall tell him frankly that I know of the existence of this plot and ask him what steps he proposes to take to prevent its coming to a head.*

However, Colonel Zymbrakakis was by no means optimistic about the future when I talked to him, and he insisted that most of the real harm was being done by reports everywhere believed that the British Government was out of sympathy with the French attitude toward Greece.

About this time we heard that two of the Royal Princes were shortly to make diplomatic journeys, Prince Andrew to England and Prince Nicholas to Russia. One of the things for which Prince Andrew was to ask specially was my recall, for it was confidentially expected that such a recall on the eve of the elections would be a sign that Great Britain did not support the intentions of Venizelos.

Without bothering too much about the prospects of my recall I sat down to write a report on the effect of the situation in Greece on the work of the Intelligence Department of the British Legation:

## GREEK MEMORIES

June 27th, 1916.

### EFFECT OF THE SITUATION IN GREECE ON THE WORK OF THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE BRITISH LEGATION

The work of the Intelligence Department in the immediate future should come under five heads:

- (1) CONTROL OF THE NEW POLICE: This can be effected partly by the prestige of our diplomatic victory, partly by subsidy. From inquiries made about the old secret police now on the verge of being turned out, I learn that the Germans are offering them various amounts (from Fcs. 200 to 400 a month) to continue working for them. This represents a capital outlay by the Germans of at least Fcs. 35,000 a month in Athens straight off, which does not include the considerably larger sums which are likely to be allotted to more important officials.

The proposals which my French colleague and I will put before Colonel Zymbrakakis, the new Chief of Police, are as follows:

We shall nominate certain particular offenders and we shall demand the dismissal of the entire staff of the secret police reconstituted by Captain Chryssospathi during the régime of the late Government.

We shall demand further that the official number of 'seventy-two', for members of the 'Sûreté du Palais', in other words the secret police, shall come back into force.

We shall demand the names of the men proposed for the vacant posts and we shall reserve to ourselves the right to object to any name. We shall then go on to say that if any attempt is made at the instigation of the Greek General Staff to reconstitute the late secret police as a third body, we shall not allow this, and we shall point out that anyone whose name has not been submitted to us and who presents himself as a police agent, will be regarded by us as a German agent, and the Greek Govern-

ment will be held responsible for his existence as being a breach of neutrality.

I do not anticipate much difficulty in controlling the secret police in Athens itself, but I expect very great difficulty in controlling the activities of the late agents in the Provinces, especially during the election time. It is essential that I should have enough funds to send out my own agents all over Greece and that they should be provided with enough funds to outbid the Germans.

I make all these remarks, of course, on the assumption that H.M.'s Government sets considerable store on the return of Mr. Venizelos to power.

- (2) SUPERVISION OF FRENCH INTELLIGENCE: I am in the happy position of being able to claim that the French and British Intelligence in Athens work in perfect harmony. At the same time, this perfect harmony is often secured on knowledge which I have beforehand of the French Intelligence, and if I consider it necessary to the success of a scheme or the security of a situation that their ideas should coincide with my own ideas, I have always been able to throw cold water gently and steadily on an extravagant arrangement or to secure for myself the carrying out of the plan and thereby determine its success or failure.

During this period before the elections, it is probable that the French will have all sorts of schemes, some of which will be extremely brilliant and some though extremely brilliant also extremely imprudent. In order to enjoy the full confidence of my colleague, it is essential that I should be able to share with him in the responsibility of any proposed undertaking, that I should not have to say, "I am very sorry, but I cannot afford it." If this happens once or twice, it will mean that the whole control of the situation will pass into the hands of the French Intelligence.

- (3) SUPERVISION OF THE ITALIAN INTELLIGENCE: As you probably know, Count Bosdari, the Italian Minister, was always against going to war with the Central Powers and



## GREEK MEMORIES

is still greatly opposed to going to war with Germany. He is also a personal enemy of Venizelos and is certainly working to promote ill-feeling between Greece and the Entente. From his point of view it will be much better for Italian ambitions in the Epirus, and Asia Minor, and Albania that at the end of the War we should not have the slightest desire to gratify any Greek ambitions. I do not know exactly on whom can be fixed the responsibility for the proposal at the naval demonstration to land Italian troops at the Piræus, but if such a landing had taken place, and it would have taken place without the providential diplomatic surrender by the Greeks, the Italian soldiers, some fifty in number, would certainly have been massacred, and the grave consequences may well be imagined. Inasmuch as the Italians definitely refused to associate themselves with the other Entente Powers in the original démarche on the grounds that Italy was not one of the Protecting Powers, it was to say the least a Machiavellian policy to send immediately afterwards an Italian ship to take part in the demonstration and land soldiers at the Piræus.

- (4) SUPERVISION OF SERBIAN INTELLIGENCE: I have been fortunate in obtaining control of the Serbian Intelligence in Athens. At the same time, to keep in touch with the multiplicity of Serbian plots and counter-plots now going on requires formation by me of an inner organization to control the organization which I officially control.
- (5) CONTROL OF PASSENGER TRAFFIC: I drew up a memorandum which was sent out in the last bag to the Foreign Office, signed by my French colleague and the Italian Military Attaché, who acts as Control Officer for the Italian Service. If our proposals be acceded to, we shall require an additional staff of official agents to visit steamships and control the traffic in the different ports of Greece.

To sum up, this is the state of my organization: I have some thirty or forty regular agents whose business it is to inquire about

individuals, when inquiries do not call for any extraordinary discretion or secrecy. I have an adequate office establishment which is kept busy all day recording results of these investigations. I have a large number of secret agents with whom I deal either myself directly or by means of the more confidential members of the organization. I have a small Serbian organization, the head of whom is paid by the Serbian Government. I have the benefit of the French Intelligence, together with a special Intelligence the means of procuring which I do not propose to specify. I am also on very good terms with the Italian Military Attaché and have the benefit of his side of the Italian organization, and I ought to say here that his side of the Italian organization is conducted in the loyallest manner for the common interests of the Allies. This, however, applies only to counter-espionage and control of travellers. I have also agents whom I lend to the British Naval Attaché for inquiries into nautical matters.

Now what I should like to have is complete control of the secret police and several sub-organizations in the provinces of Greece, particularly at Corinth and Calambaka. I should like to enlarge my Serbian Organization by employing one or two people as secret agents to supervise the Organization I already have. I should also like to devote some money to political Intelligence about the Italians. It is also essential that I should not lean too much on the charity of the French.

These wishes can all be gratified by liberality in the matter of working funds.

## CHAPTER VII: JULY

### SECOND ATTEMPT ON THE GERMAN MAIL

THE weather throughout the dog days waxed hotter and hotter. For several of them the thermometer stood at  $110^{\circ}$  in the shade. Earthquake shocks were frequent. Sandflies were a torture.

The demand for the dismissal of some two hundred secret police by Ricaud and myself coincided with an attempt to wreck my car, not the Sunbeam, but a 60-h.p. Lancia which we had borrowed from a sympathizer while the Sunbeam was having a well-deserved fortnight's holiday to be overhauled and be repainted black. I was driving home with Robertson down the straight Phaleron road at nearly eighty miles an hour, when I noticed him leaning forward and listening. Immediately afterward he slowed down, and just as the car stopped one of the front wheels came right off. He was a wonderful chauffeur, gifted with an uncanny ear to detect above the drone of that powerful monster what was to me the inaudible sound of a wheel working loose. I recall now the savage heat of the sidewalk, while I stood waiting for Robertson to fix the wheel, and the way I hopped about like the proverbial cat on hot bricks. That loosened wheel was a strange business. Usually Robertson never let the car out of his sight after he had given it his daily overhaul. That morning, however, he had been called away for half an hour to settle some question about the Sunbeam, and having been sent for by me in a hurry he had not inspected the Lancia the second time. For the first time there had been an opportunity to tamper with the new car, but we never discovered who it was that did so.

By July 5th I was writing with somewhat premature confidence that one hundred and forty-four secret police agents had been banished not merely from Athens but from everywhere in Attica or Bœotia. Everything seemed to be going well, but it was clear even as early as that what a hard fight the election would be, and I was writing that, although I felt perfectly sure of victory in the end, we must not take it all too much for granted. I was writing too that the new election would probably be held in the first week of September. This contradicts the assertions repeatedly made in print that M. Guillemin demanded the postponement of the election, and thus prevented its being held a month after the acceptance of the Note as had been originally agreed. As a matter of fact I was always pressing for it to be held as soon as possible, because we had information that the Gounarists were engineering various schemes likely to threaten the certainty of a Venizelist victory. I still write of the opponents of Venizelos as Gounarists, but by then Gounarism was merged in the larger party of Royalism.

The Greek police were not our only problem. The Italian police offered problems too. At the beginning of July, owing to the behaviour of the Messina police and port authorities, we missed securing what might have been important diplomatic dispatches from Berlin to Greece. They were to be carried by one of the attachés of the Greek Legation in Berlin, and there seemed so much interest in Germanophile circles in Athens about this mail that we felt it would be worth some trouble and expense to secure. As soon as we heard when the attaché was to leave Berlin, I sent a female agent to attempt the theft of the mail en route. She got in touch with her proposed victim in the train going down to Rome and she played her part so well that on the way to Sicily the courier showed her his diplomatic bag and a special private mail addressed to the German Legation in Athens, which he told her he had been ordered to destroy at

once if, during the crossing from Messina to Patras, the Greek steamer *Nafcratoussa* were stopped by an Allied patrol ship.

The *Nafcratoussa* was due to sail for Patras on Wednesday morning, June 28th; but instead of sailing then she had not at that date reached Messina. Probably by this time our agent had allowed her anxiety to become evident. Anyway, the courier seemed to regret his intimacy and told her that he was not going to sail on the *Nafcratoussa* after all. This news she telegraphed to me in code, whereupon I instructed her to wait in Messina until the courier did sail and to telegraph the news of his departure and the name of the ship, to sail by the same ship herself, and when the steamer was stopped by one of our patrols to notify the captain immediately that I would hold him personally responsible if he allowed the courier to destroy his mails before the steamer was boarded.

The *Nafcratoussa* came in that afternoon, and our agent being assured that the courier was sailing in it after all had her luggage sent on board and went back to the post-office. She was just writing out a telegram to me when an Italian official, whom she had noticed examining passports on board the *Nafcratoussa*, arrived with a couple of *carabinieri*. At his instance they arrested our agent and took her to the police-station in Messina, where she was kept all day without being allowed to communicate with anybody until five minutes before the *Nafcratoussa* sailed about dusk, when she was bundled on board. The excuse for this behaviour was that she was a German, which in any case was no excuse at all, because at this date Italy and Germany were not at war; and of course her passport was perfectly in order. It had been visaed by the Bureau de Contrôle in Paris, and what is more she had been granted special exemption from having her luggage examined anywhere, in case she should be fortunate enough to secure the bag en route. Her luggage was never examined even at Messina, which was a proof that the Italian

port authorities knew perfectly well she was either a French or a British agent. Indeed, a few minutes after the *Nafcratoussa* sailed she was told by the captain that if the steamer were stopped by a submarine she would be surrendered as a French agent. The result of all this was that we received no warning of the courier's departure and were unable to signal it to our patrols. So he and his mail reached Athens without interference.

It was not much consolation to secure the dismissal of the *Nafcratoussa's* captain. Colonel Mombelli and Commander Arletto, the Italian Naval Attaché in Athens, took up this matter strongly with the Naval and Military Authorities in Italy; but it was impossible to get even as much satisfaction as a reprimand to the port officials at Messina, who were under the civil authority, between which and the Comando Supremo existed a perpetual feud.

Among the news that this mail brought to Athens was presumably an order of recall for Grancy, the German Marine Attaché, for within twelve hours of the courier's arrival it was reported to us that Grancy had been transferred to Washington, whither he was to travel in one of the large mercantile submarines after he got away from Greece. We supposed that this was to be one of those dramatic gestures with which during the War the Germans from time to time tried to impress neutrals. When the news of Grancy's appointment to Washington was circulated in the Greek Press, the Ententophobe papers accompanied it with sneering references to Britannia's ruling of the waves, and I made up my mind that Grancy's journey from Athens to Washington should not be an easy one so long as he was travelling in Greece.

#### THIRD ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE THE GERMAN MAIL

It may be remembered that on the night of June 21st when the Note was presented three officers were reported to have

arrived from Germany. Two of them, of whose existence I was never quite sure, were supposed to have returned immediately. The third officer was real enough. He was Major von Schweinitz, ex-A.D.C. to Prince Oscar of Prussia, and he remained in Athens. Presently it was reported that in addition to Grancy's transfer to Washington, Major von Falkenhausen, the German Military Attaché, had been recalled to Berlin and would hand over his duties to Major von Schweinitz.

Throughout July rumour and counter-rumour, report and contradiction, kept us busy trying to anticipate the movements of these two officers, and we had enough on our hands besides. The proscription of the secret police, which had been accepted so cordially by the new Government, became a different matter when it had to be put into execution. By July 25th I was noting that of the two hundred police proscribed for expulsion from Attica and Bœotia not one had been removed so far. Some had been given sick leave with justification. Some were being excused for family reasons. Every man proscribed necessitated half a dozen letters, because for every one the Government used to ask if we could not make an exception in his favour as soon as his removal had been promised. In view of the fact that I had refused to accept any French evidence of the misbehaviour of the secret police which was not supported by our own evidence, the task of answering these letters always fell upon myself. On top of that onerous correspondence was the job of distributing the benzine.

During July the British Legation had assumed the responsibility of distributing benzine (petrol), the importation of which had been regulated for some months. Every application even for a single tin was now referred to the Intelligence Department, and no benzine was allotted without a recommendation from myself or my accredited representative. This added greatly to the work of an already overworked staff. Still, with the new

elections fixed for the beginning of September, we could not afford to deprive ourselves of such a valuable method of ascertaining public opinion.

In the week ending July 22nd, four thousand cases of benzine arrived, and not a single case could be released until we had made as many inquiries about its destination as we should have made about a man's passport. The amount of work entailed by redressing grievances and adjusting disputes can be imagined. Finally, the Greek demobilization added much to the labours of the Passport Bureau, which was now occupying incessantly all day long Tucker, Miss Cook, five clerks, and some twenty inquiry agents.

On July 27th it was reported by a member of Grancy's household that he and Falkenhausen were preparing to leave Greece at once by submarine, and, as we had just heard from the only Russian source of information worth tapping that the experiment of running a submarine postal service was presently to be tried, I resolved to make a special effort to track the movements of the two German Attachés and if possible circumvent them. Our new control of benzine distribution gave us a good deal of power over the Athenian chauffeurs, and having discovered that Grancy had hired a motor-car for the month of July at eighty francs a day, I sent for the chauffeur, a certain Zoiopoulos, and cut off his benzine allowance. This naturally depressed him, and he asked what he had done to deserve such treatment. I reminded him that he had been driving the German Marine Attaché about, which he at once admitted:

"But I should be just as willing to drive the British Naval Attaché about if he hired my car," Zoiopoulos added.

"You are under no obligation of loyalty to Baron de Grancy?" I asked.

"None at all," he declared. "He is for me a piece of business."



"Then you would have no objection to giving me any information I want about his movements?" I suggested.

"With all the pleasure in the world," said Zoiopoulos, "so long as I am given my fair allowance of benzine every week."

The following day, July 26th, Zoiopoulos sent me an urgent message that he had been ordered to be at 23 Homer Street at 7.45 that evening to drive Grancy out to Cephissia, that he was to carry enough benzine for a journey of three hundred kilometres, and that he was to be ready to leave Cephissia again punctually at nine o'clock. Meanwhile, from another source I heard that Grancy's luggage had been taken down to the Piræus that morning. This seemed odd, but I presumed that the luggage had been taken down there as a blind and that the agent had lost sight of its true destination, which I supposed was Cephissia. I tried to get into touch with that member of Grancy's household who was giving me information when he could; but I failed to do this. I felt positive that somebody was going to leave Athens, and, knowing that von Schweinitz had moved from his hotel on July 22nd, to take up his residence with Grancy and Falkenhausen at 23 Homer Street, I decided that it must be Grancy or Falkenhausen or both. That departure I determined if possible to prevent.

With that end in view we hired two cars and kept in reserve the powerful Lancia. These two hired cars, numbered 95 and 417, were ordered to follow 148, which was the number of Grancy's hired car, to Cephissia. I drove down myself in the Lancia to Phaleron, which lay in the other direction from Cephissia, and dined there as conspicuously as I could on the terrace of the big hotel. I had arranged with Zanardi that he was to be at Cephissia railway-station at ten o'clock and give me a report of what had happened when at nine o'clock Grancy's car had left, followed as I hoped by the two hired cars 95 and 417. In these I had placed ten of my men who I knew would

not shirk a fight with the boat crew of a submarine, and the two cars had been given small bags of flour with instructions to indicate the route they had taken at every cross road.

I reached the railway-station at ten o'clock, where Zanardi met me with the information that car 148 had not yet left Cephissia, but was still waiting in the garden of Prince Ypsilanti's house, the approaches to the two gates of the drive being commanded by our hired cars 95 and 417. I brought the Lancia along and took up a position behind car 95.

After we had been waiting nearly an hour a car came quickly down the Ypsilanti drive and turned to the right outside the gate. It was very dark and, supposing this car to be 148, we pursued it a few hundred yards, when luckily we discovered that it was Prince Ypsilanti's own car apparently empty, whereupon we turned round and returned as quickly as possible to guard the approaches to the house again, where 148 was still waiting.

At a quarter to twelve 148 suddenly came out at full speed from the gate and turned sharp to the left. All our cars gave chase, 417 getting off first, followed by 95, with the Lancia third. Grancy's hired car presently turned into a side road, along which it was followed by 417; but in the clouds of dust raised by the four cars, neither those in 95 nor we in the Lancia saw that the other two had turned off, for in the darkness and dust it was impossible to distinguish anything twenty yards ahead. Cephissia is an easy place in which to lose sight of a car, and before we had reached the outskirts of the village we had passed about nine turnings on either side of the road, down any one of which the other cars might have gone. I signalled 95 to stop for a consultation, and while we were wondering how we were going to pick up the trail Grancy's car 148 shot past us again at about fifty miles an hour on the Athens road. We followed at full speed and were within twenty yards of the enemy

when 95 broke down and very nearly smashed us up in the Lancia. However, Robertson by his best driving steered clear, and within a very short time the Lancia was close behind 148 again. With only one car ahead of us now the dust was not so thick and by the light of our lamps I could see that there was only one person sitting inside and that this man was not Grancy, whose beard made him readily distinguishable. It was impossible, however, to ascertain if the inmate were von Falkenhausen or von Schweinitz.

For two miles we went tearing along on a vile road, and then just as the dust became thicker than ever 148 extinguished his tail light. The driving both of Zoiopoulos in his own car and of Robertson in the Lancia was really superb. We never travelled less than sixty miles an hour, and we touched eighty fairly often. The road was uneven and snakelike, and for part of the way there was a steep declivity with neither hedge nor wall between us and destruction. I suggested to Robertson that I should try to puncture the tyre of 148 with a pistol shot; but he thought that if I succeeded in hitting a tyre while we were travelling at this speed he might not be able to avoid a fatal crash, and that, if he slowed down for me to shoot and I missed, we might not be able to pick up the other car again. So we decided to keep on at the pace we were going and try to run the enemy to earth. Alas, we were to be defeated by the dust, for when we reached the tram lines in Athens, after nearly hitting three standards one after another, we had to slow down, and 148 escaped from us down a side turning.

I have been writing about the dust, and it occurs to me that readers may be fancying the sort of dust that used to be raised on a respectable English road after a fortnight's fine weather. This was the dust of five rainless months, on a road with a loose surface. When we alighted from the Lancia we could hardly recognize one another, so thickly were we caked, and a dense fog

hung over the Cephissia road behind us, dimming the very street-lamps.

I found out later from Zoipoulos, the chauffeur of 148, what happened after we gave up the chase.

When 148 had first left Prince Ypsilanti's house there had been four people in the car, Falkenhausen, Grancy, Schweinitz, and a foreigner whom Zoipoulos did not know. When he had turned off the main road to the right it had been to drop everybody except Schweinitz at Falkenhausen's house in Cephissia. They had not driven fast, for they had not apparently been pursued by any car. This was accounted for by the report I had received of 417, which had driven into a ditch shortly after turning to the right, and so failed to follow 148. When Schweinitz left Falkenhausen's house in 148, he ordered Zoipoulos to drive back as quickly as possible to Athens. On the discovery that he was being pursued by the Lancia he had stuck a pistol against his driver's ribs and warned him that if he allowed the car behind to catch him up he would pay for it.

"So that's why you drove so fast," I said. "I wondered what you were playing at."

"Yes, I think anybody would drive fast for a man like that," Zoipoulos agreed.

As soon as von Schweinitz was satisfied that he had shaken us off he told Zoipoulos to drive to Homer Street, where he stopped the car a little above Grancy's house, which he entered. After remaining inside for about five minutes he came out with an overcoat and cap, got into the car again, and told Zoipoulos to drive to Raphina. Two kilometres before arriving at the village of Raphina he stopped the car and alighted, where the road to Marathon crosses the Raphina road, telling Zoipoulos to drive back at once to Athens.

From Zoipoulos I found out that Prince Ypsilanti's car which had left the house at eleven o'clock was not empty as we

had imagined, but that one of the King's aide-de-camps had driven back in it to his own house in Cephissia.

What happened to Major von Schweinitz after Zoiopoulos left him at the Marathon-Raphina cross-road we never discovered. Did he travel north by road or did he leave Greece in a submarine? Readers of detective fiction may be able to solve the problem.

If Major von Schweinitz went north by car, he must have been met by another car arriving after Zoiopoulos had gone back. It will be remembered that Zoiopoulos was ordered to carry benzine for a journey of three hundred kilometres; but this benzine he took back with him to Athens. Therefore the other car must have brought the same amount. Our control over the distribution of benzine had not been running long enough at that date for us to be able to check all the benzine in Athens, so that this was not an impossibility. At the same time we were able to establish conclusively that no public car drove him and almost conclusively that no private car, unless it was one of the Royal cars, drove him. Later on we established the fact that provisions for a long journey had been ordered by von Schweinitz. That pointed against the theory that he was taken off by a submarine. Anyway, there were no provisions in car 148. Nor was there any of that luggage which had been taken to the Piræus and was evidently his luggage and not Grancy's. What became of that? As a matter of fact we found out later that there was no question by this date of Grancy's and Falkenhäusen's leaving Athens, for by special request of the Queen the transfer of both of them had already been cancelled from Berlin.

In favour of the theory of transportation by submarine were the persistent reports we had received of communication with submarines both at Raphina and Marathon. The spot at which von Schweinitz alighted was very near the coast. Marathon lies

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well away from the main north road, and there was no occasion to take such a roundabout route for the purposes of safety, for by now, owing to the Tatöi fire, all cars travelling along the main north road were being stopped, and had we attempted to pursue a car that way we should inevitably have been stopped by the King's police.

It was a great disappointment that we failed to bring off this coup, for we might easily have succeeded in capturing the boat crew of a submarine, the moral effect of which would have been invaluable; and if the submarine had been a Boojum and Schweinitz had travelled north by car we should probably have succeeded in capturing his dispatches before he reached Larissa.

I used this abortive attempt to press strongly again for a fast armed motor-boat to supplement our work on land, but without success.

The anti-Venizelist scribes have made much play of the failure of the Intelligence Service to give positive information to the Navy where a submarine would be at a certain hour on a certain date; but with the resources at our disposal and the difficulty of any communication with either the British or French patrol vessels, we might as well have been asked to catch a dolphin with a butterfly-net.

## CALUMNY

I have mentioned the Tatöi fire and must go back a week or two from the date I have reached at the end of July in order to supplement the narrative.

One evening, while I was sitting on the balcony of the villa in Phaleron, gasping for breath and trying to muster up enough energy to go back to the Annexe and do a couple of hours' work, the sky to north and east became lurid, and I thought we were in for a really bad earthquake shock. The air, which seemed to smell of sulphur, was acrid and reasty on the tongue. Presently

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Tucker arrived to say that miles of woodland round Tatōi were on fire and that the conflagration was spreading. This was on Thursday evening, July 13th. The fire continued to rage all next day, and at one time it threatened even Cephissia. The Royal Palace was completely destroyed with ten square miles of forest. Eighteen soldiers and policemen lost their lives in fighting the flames, and among them was Captain Chryssospathi. Whether it was the death of this prominent enemy of theirs which started the tale that the woods of Tatōi had been deliberately set on fire by the 'Anglo-French secret police' I do not know; but apparently the King himself and the King's friends believed this preposterous accusation. What was to be gained by setting fire to Tatōi nobody has suggested; but the story has been repeated in print, and I will take this opportunity of denying its truth. Prince Nicholas, who is the most explicit accuser, heard the news of the fire at Zürich, which he had reached on his way to Russia, having left the Piræus with Prince Andrew three days before. He says:

"The very first thought that crossed my mind on receiving the dreadful news was that the fire was not an accident, but the result of a cowardly plot carried out with a criminal purpose. Knowing as I did how the Secret Police Service was constituted and the character of its members, I felt instinctively this was their work." \*

With his mind already made up, it was not difficult for Prince Nicholas on returning to Athens about the middle of October to find his suspicions confirmed by the cock-and-bull story he proceeds to relate. No suggestion was made at the time that this deplorable affair was anything but an accident which might easily occur in any country of pines after a drought of five months, and the statement of Prince Nicholas that the matter

\* *Political Memoirs*, H.R.H. Prince Nicholas of Greece, p. 129.

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was hushed up after foreign intervention is without foundation. Neither de Roquefeuil nor Ricaud is alive to repudiate the slander. On their behalf I repudiate it.

Is it reasonable to suppose that, if there had been a shred of evidence that the fire was incendiary, nobody connected with the British Legation should have heard a whisper of such evidence at the time?

At the end of June or the beginning of July Lord Denman had visited Athens and was probably received at first with that slight constraint with which by now we had learnt to receive the peripatetic amateurs of diplomacy who were sent out from time to time to have a look round Athens and tell them at home what was really going on there. Lord Denman was not one of those who thought that within twenty-four hours of his arrival in Greece he was in a position to telegraph to London a solution for every difficulty in the Balkans. He took the trouble to master the intricacy of the situation and, when he did go home, he probably gave the Foreign Office the most accurate estimate of the situation they had received from anybody who had visited Athens. He spent a good deal of time with me, and I put all our papers at his disposal. My first meeting with him is as clear as if it had happened yesterday. Notwithstanding the fearful heat he always looked as if he had only that moment put on his clothes, so white and glossy was his collar, so dustless was his coat. The neatness of his external appearance was such that when I suddenly saw a large bug walking across his collar I felt that to warn him of its company almost within a minute of first shaking hands with him was too impossibly crude a reception. At the same time my own horror of bugs prevented my picking it off his collar, dropping it on the floor, and stamping upon it. However, action had to be taken. Murmuring something about a mosquito, I leant over and flicked it from his collar just as Tucker came in to the room on business. I looked anxiously



about the floor; but I could see no sign of the bug until about five minutes later I saw it walking round Tucker's collar. Before I could warn him he had gone out of the room again and taken the bug with him. Its future movements, like those of so many other suspects, we failed to trace.

After Major Dash's report in March I had been recommended for a captaincy, but in spite of Sir Francis Elliot's repeated reminders there was no sign of promotion. Since I was always in mufti at this date my own rank did not matter; but my being a lieutenant was one of the excuses for not giving Tucker the commission for which he longed, since if he had been made a Lieutenant R.N.V.R., the usual rank given to C's men, he would have taken precedence of myself as a Marine.

Sir Francis Elliot spoke to Lord Denman and asked him to press with Lord Hardinge for this promotion now long overdue. The result of this intervention was that I was gazetted Captain on July 28th, and able to agitate for Tucker's commission with fresh hope of obtaining it for him.

By the time Lord Denman reached London Prince Andrew of Greece had arrived in England on his diplomatic mission, and had asked specially for my recall. Questions were asked in high quarters about the 'Anglo-French Secret Police.' Lord Hardinge made inquiries of Lord Denman, who was able to give him a first-hand account of the Intelligence Department attached to the British Legation, and Prince Andrew's request was not acceded to.

On July 14th a great crowd of over ten thousand people cheered before the French Legation. No doubt this will be attributed to French money. Half the crowd came on and filled the square in front of the British Legation, cheering wildly. I can guarantee that this extra enthusiasm at any rate was supplied gratis.

Sir Francis Elliot had already started home to Cephissia when the demonstration took place, and there was nobody left in the Chancery except Bridgeman. He felt that some kind of reply should be made in acknowledgment of this spontaneous tribute and suggested reading the communiqué from the Western Front which had just arrived. As I remember, it was one of those optimistic announcements about the Battle of the Somme then raging. I thought this was a capital notion. So Bridgeman stood on the balcony of the Annexe and read the communiqué in English and French. I can see him now in white, as romantic a figure as Byron himself.

I suggested that somebody should translate it into Greek, and Poseidon volunteered to read it. How many extra prisoners and how many extra miles of territory were captured from the Germans in his version who shall say? But the cheering was louder than ever, so loud that we began to think the War must be nearly over. The effect on Poseidon of reading this communiqué was to instil in him the belief that he was a second Demosthenes, of which there will be more to relate presently. That night there was a great demonstration at the Opera, when the whole audience rose and sang the *Marseillaise* and the Greek National Anthem. It is possible, of course, that the audience consisted of 'deadheads.'

Toward the end of the month, when we were nearly driven mad by heat, sandflies, arguments about passport control, inquiries about police, distribution of petrol, lack of clerical assistance, questions from Alexandria, and the pressing need of estimating the political situation in view of the near approach of the Election, Captain Vere Ker-Seymer arrived in Athens from Salonica, presumably to make yet another overhead report on the Intelligence Department of the British Legation.

"Well, Ker-Seymer, whose spy are you?" was my greeting.

Ker-Seymer was an unusually charming personality, a *boulevardier* of the old school who spoke French like a *parigot*,

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an admirable *raconteur*, suave of manner and distinguished in appearance.

"Whose spy am I? That's a little rough, Mackenzie. I was sent out by C to have a look round and let him know how things were going in Greece."

"Then you're C's spy," I said. "Thanks, I simply wanted to know."

"Why do you take my visit in that spirit?" he asked.

"Well," I replied, "you passed through Athens nearly a month ago, and you allowed it to get about in the course of a two hours' visit that you had strict orders not to speak to anybody in my show. You also let fall a hint that you were going to Salonica with the idea of arranging matters up there without interference from the Legation here. What I don't understand is why, if you were so careful to avoid myself and anybody connected with the Annexe hardly a month ago, you are now so anxious to do exactly the reverse."

"My dear man, I have no earthly business to be stopping in Athens now," he assured me. "But I saw no reason why I shouldn't combine a little pleasure with business and see something of Athens from that point of view before I went back. I'll let you have copies of the two reports I'm taking back with me about C's show in Salonica if you like. I don't think you'll find anything to disagree with."

I never did find out what Ker-Seymer's real instructions were, but I liked him personally, and, being by this time completely indifferent to what was said or thought about myself so long as my direction of the Intelligence Department achieved its object, I bothered no more about the reasons for Ker-Seymer's visit and made up my mind to enjoy his excellent company as long as it was available.

He was with me in the Lancia during the pursuit of Major von Schweinitz, and nothing brings back to me more vividly

that desperate drive through the darkness and dust than the first picture of Ker-Seymer entering the car a spruce, well-preserved, debonair, middle-aged man, and the second picture of Ker-Seymer alighting from it when we reached Athens, his clothes unrecognizable and the lines in his face caulked with a mixture of dust and perspiration, a haggard old man.

"My god, Mackenzie," he breathed. "I really must try to get you that fast armed motor-boat you want."

The next day Ker-Seymer left for London. He had been excellent company.

By the end of the month the determination of his enemies to prevent the return of Mr. Venizelos to power was more apparent than ever, and a new element of disorder arose with the creation of the Leagues of Reservists formed from demobilized soldiers who were allowed to keep their arms and ammunition with the object of terrorizing the voters when the General Election was held. This was a successful device by the opponents of Mr. Venizelos to enjoy all the advantages of a mobilized army without any of the disadvantages, for the subsidy of these Leagues was undertaken by Germany.

Nor were the higher functionaries of ecclesiasticism behind the tools of militarism in the fight against Venizelos.

I print a circular letter written and signed by the Metropolitan Ambrosios and Archbishop Nicephoros. The date is July 22nd:

TO THE ELECTORS, BROTHERS IN JESUS CHRIST

We, the undersigned, have received from thousands of reservists and citizens a demand to excommunicate ELEUTHERIOS VENIZELOS as one guilty of high treason. He has betrayed our nation to the French and English. He is responsible for the Note of the three Powers that caused such bitter grief to our beloved KING. This Note was sent in order that our noble King might be compelled to summon to office that mercenary Senegalese he-goat VENIZELOS, the instigator of the Tatöi fire.

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Upon this traitor, VENIZELOS, we have pronounced EXCOMMUNICATION with the prayer that the following calamities may befall him:

THE SORES OF JOB  
THE FATE OF JONAH  
THE LEPROSY OF JOHAVA  
THE GLOOM OF THE DEAD  
THE AGONY OF THE DYING  
THE THUNDERS OF HELL  
THE CURSE OF GOD AND OF MEN

The same anathema will be pronounced against all those who vote for the traitor VENIZELOS at the coming Elections. In addition we shall pray that their hands may wither, and that they may become deaf and blind.

Amen.

(Signed) AMBROSIOS Metropolitan  
NICEPHOROS Archbishop.

However, there were still brave spirits prepared to defy these ecclesiastical borborhygmi, as the following letter sent to me shows:

*To the Ambassador of the British Embassy, Athens,*  
VON MACKENSEN.

*Excellency :*

*Being a great friend of England and her Allies, I would kindly request you to send me some books and pictures of your King and your Queen and of the Army.*

*Yours very truly,*  
Stavros G. Zouleles  
*of Zatouna in Gortynia.*

## CHAPTER VIII: AUGUST

### FINAL ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE THE GERMAN MAIL

AUGUST opened badly for myself with an attack of what was diagnosed as 'sandfly fever.' I do not recommend it as an illness. It begins with the temperature soaring abruptly. Mine touched  $106^{\circ}$  within an hour. Then just as I was in full delirium (which took the not unexciting fancy of an attack in force by Reservists on the old Cypriote mariner who acted as night-watchman at the Phaleron villa and a violent desire on my part to go to his rescue with a hammer which I kept handy for bugs) it dropped as abruptly. Two hours later it was down again almost to normal, but I was left with bad arthritic pains all over. The following evening my temperature soared hastily to  $105^{\circ}$  and then came down again. It continued to behave like this with gradually diminishing high jumps for over a week. It was a great bore to be kept in bed at this time, because the work at the Annexe was, as always, increasing and without my presence liable at any moment to get hopelessly congested at some point or another.

When I was well enough to move, which was not until August 14th, it was thought advisable for me to leave Phaleron and escape the autumnal sea-damps. The new house was in Ghizi Street at the far end of the long, narrow, and straight Hippocrates Street. It was a detached house, and I rented only the upper story. The surroundings were not as yet built over, though there was evidence everywhere of construction and development. No doubt by now I should not recognize the quarter. The house itself stood on top of a knoll surrounded by a

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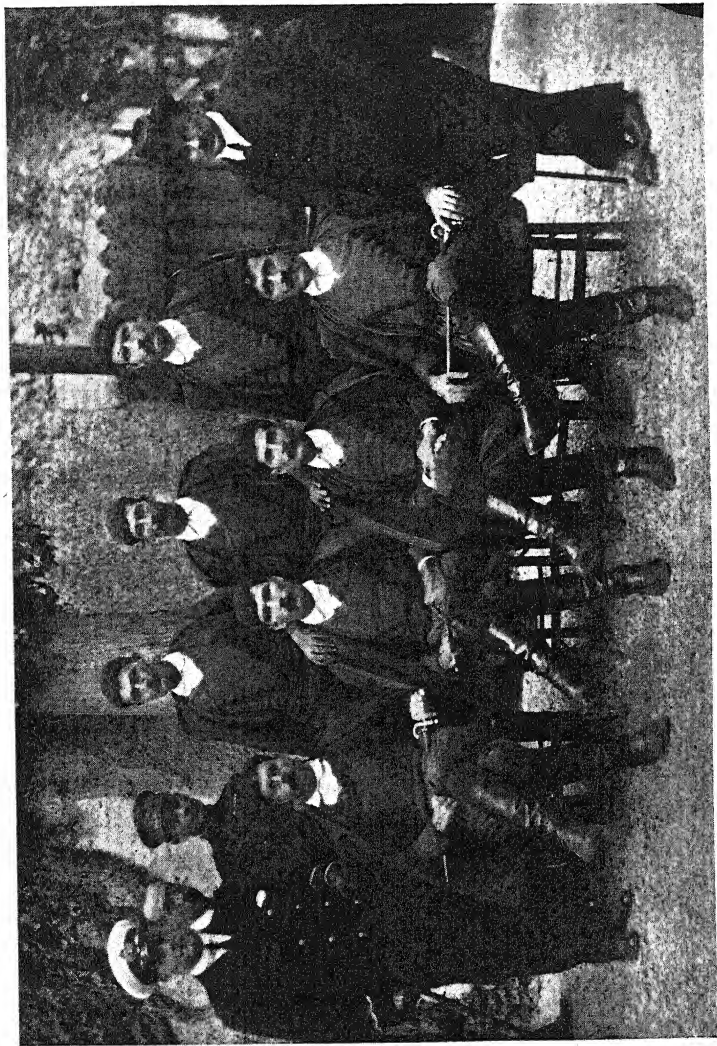
small but pleasant garden, and from the balcony of the sitting-room there was a wide view across the Attic plain to the bright girdle of the sea.

My convalescence from the fever received a fine tonic in the shape of a telegram from London to say that at last Tucker had been gazetted Assistant-Paymaster in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. Within six minutes of receiving this announcement one of the heaviest chestnut-brown moustaches a man could carry had vanished from Tucker's face, and for a moment I thought that delirium had returned when I saw coming round the door of my room what looked like a very large baby dressed in grown-up attire. It was a bit of a blow to poor Tucker that he had not been given the executive curl of a lieutenant; but I promised to do my best to obtain this for him in due course. And to Robertson I vowed to redouble my efforts to obtain for him promotion to the rank of Corporal in the Army Service Corps.

After our disappointment over the Greek bag at the beginning of July we had another try for it at the beginning of August, information having reached us from a very high source that Diamandopoulos, the new Attaché appointed to the Greek Legation in Berlin, would carry with him important communications which, if we could intercept them, might change the whole political situation. Diamandopoulos was to travel through Italy and Switzerland, and I saw little prospect of securing his dispatches without Italian help.

Colonel Mombelli, after being assured that we had positive information that the German mail was being carried in the Greek diplomatic bag, telegraphed to the Comando Supremo, and Diamandopoulos was arrested at the Swiss Frontier. The Military Authorities, however, did not venture to open the bag themselves, but sent it down to the Consulta\* in Rome, where

\* Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Assistant-Paymaster Charles Tucker, R.N.V.R., with some of the King's Cretan Bodyguard in their blue uniform piped with yellow. The shortest man is 6 ft. 2 in.





## AUGUST

Diamandopoulos solemnly declared he was carrying nothing except the official Greek dispatches. Colonel Mombelli, on being informed what had happened, suggested that Sir Rennell Rodd, our Ambassador in Rome, should be asked to move in the matter. Sir Francis Elliot, however, did not feel that he could press for British intervention in view of the fact that Count Bosdari, the Italian Minister in Athens, would not support his request. He pointed out how awkward it would be if our information were wrong, and if actually Diamandopoulos turned out to be carrying nothing except diplomatic, and as such sacrosanct, correspondence. He thought there was nothing for us to do except rely on Colonel Mombelli's eloquence to persuade the Comando Supremo to protest against the bag's being surrendered.

It was a most tantalizing situation, but in the middle of the telegraphic exchanges fortune put us in the way of perhaps being able to capture an exclusively German mail, the prospect of which did more to set me on my feet again than all the medicine I had drunk.

One evening Tucker came into my room at the Annexe—I was back at work by then—to say that he had been approached by a man trading as a man-milliner, cleaner and dyer, under the pseudonym of Chic, written 'Tsic' in Greek, who offered for the sum of six thousand francs to put us in the way of capturing the German courier due to leave Athens on the night of August 17th. It appeared that the usual courier, a Salonica Jew called Gaetano, had been struck down by the same kind of fever from which I had just recovered. Gaetano, unwilling to lose the money he was paid for the transport of the mail, had commissioned an acquaintance of his, an Austrian or German called John Wagner, who was a clerk in some commercial firm at the Piræus, to undertake the transport of the mail. Wagner, who according to Chic was a simple kind of creature, was to receive

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only two hundred francs and his out-of-pocket expenses for a job for which Gaetano himself was paid two thousand francs, and which he had already successfully carried through half a dozen times. Chic expressed high indignation at Gaetano's meanness and averred that it was to punish such meanness he had decided to put us in the way of capturing the mail.

I asked Chic, who was not a pleasant personality, what business Gaetano's meanness was of his.

"It is like this," he explained, "Wagner is engaged to marry my sister."

"And so Wagner," I asked, "who was fool enough to accept two hundred francs from Gaetano, is now clever enough to betray his country for six thousand?"

"Oh no," the man-milliner replied, "Wagner will never betray his country; but he is a poor man, and as my sister is anxious to get married to him as soon as possible she thinks that if we tell you how Wagner will go with the mail you may take it from him by force, and he will never know that she has been paid two thousand francs, which is the proper fee for it, and so perfectly just."

"But you want six thousand francs?"

"That is so," Chic agreed. "Two thousand for my sister and four thousand for myself. After all," he went on, "Gaetano has been paid two thousand by Grancy at the German Legation, and he is all the while doing nothing but lying in bed like a pig and calling himself ill."

"Well, if the poor devil feels anything like what I felt last week he is feeling pretty ill."

With this I dismissed the man-milliner, telling him I would think the matter over. At the end of a long consultation with Tucker I sent him off to bargain with Chic.

Tucker reported that Chic would not abate one franc of his price, but that he would help us to capture the mail from Wag-

ner and was agreeable not to be paid a sou until the bags were in our hands.

"And he has a jolly good plan, Captain Z," Tucker went on. "He and his sister are going to ask Wagner to supper with them at their house before he leaves, and he suggests that we should have a carriage waiting at the foot of the road, and that when Wagner starts he will call up this carriage, which will be driven by one of our men, and that this carriage should be stopped by two more of our men disguised as Greek gendarmes. He swears that Wagner is so simple and foolish that when they tell him we are going to take the mail for safety and send it by a Greek destroyer he will at once give it up to us."

"Yes, the scheme sounds almost as simple as Wagner himself," I agreed. "But what if Wagner refuses to part with the bag?"

Tucker shrugged his shoulders.

"*A la guerre comme à la guerre*, Captain Z," he grimly commented.

"Paymaster, I do believe you're the toughest sea-dog since Sir Ralph the Rover walked the deck."

"No, seriously, Captain Z," Tucker protested. "I've thought out the details to rights. We'll hire a carriage, and I'll drive it myself."

"Well, as you've been bragging about your skill as a charioteer ever since last September, I shall look forward to that part of the business. What next?"

"Wagner will carry the letters sewn up in cushions. His orders are not to leave for Larissa from the Athens railway-station, but to drive on to Pyrgos which is two stations along on the way north. He is to catch the early morning train which reaches Pyrgos about four o'clock, and at Larissa he'll be met by Gaetano's regular agent who will supply him with a horse on which he is to ride on northward until he reaches Berat,

where he's to hand over the mail-bags to the officer at the first Austrian outpost. Well, my idea is that just about half-way between Athens and Pyrgos we'll have a car waiting in which will be Bonaparte and . . ."

"But, my dear Paymaster," I said, "if Wagner sees Bonaparte waiting for him in a car, he'll jump out of the carriage and run back to Athens before you or anybody else can stop him."

"No, please, Captain Z," Tucker pleaded, "this is really serious."

"By gad, it is," I assented. "It's going to cost us six thousand francs without counting any damage you may do to the carriage and pair. You'd much better leave Bonaparte out of this ambushade, because if Wagner doesn't bolt at the sight of him the horses certainly will, and then you'll be flung off the box and we'll never be able to provide you with a proper naval funeral in Athens. Of course, I might have your body sewn up in a sack with some of the lead the Chancery uses for weighting bags . . . well, go on, what action is Bonaparte to take on seizing Wagner?"

"Why, if he's in khaki with white aiguillettes he'll look just like a gendarme."

"Like one of the gendarmes in the Offenbach duet."

"Ah, but we've got one real gendarme's uniform upstairs. You remember Athanassaki whom we engaged last month as an under-porter? He used to be in the gendarmery, and when he left he never gave them back his uniform. So I thought he could put this on again, and Wagner would never suspect anything."

"All right," I said, "you've driven Wagner and his bags along until Athanassaki and Bonaparte stop the carriage. Then what happens?"

"Why, they'll tell Wagner they've had word from the Ministry of the Interior that the British Secret Service is going to make an attempt to steal the mail, and they'll invite Wagner

to get into the car with them and drive back to the Ministry of the Interior, where arrangements will be made to dispatch him safely on his journey."

"That's all right," I said. "But what happens to Wagner when you don't drive him back to the Ministry of the Interior?"

"Well, my notion was that Captain Rogers could have the *Valkyrie* all ready to put out to sea at Phaleron, and we could drive him down to the quayside and push him into the dinghy which would be waiting, and let Captain Rogers keep him on board until he hears from us what to do with him."

Though I could not resist chaffing Tucker, I was impressed by the plan, which promised well if Wagner really was carrying the mail. I suggested Raphina instead of Phaleron as a safer and less public place for Wagner to embark; but on consulting Rogers I found that he was doubtful of being able to get round as far as Raphina in time, and once more I cursed our lack of a fast motor-boat and our dependency on a small sailing-vessel.

On the morning of the 17th Tucker told me he had hired a carriage and pair for twenty-four hours. He was so much elated by this that he wanted me to go for a drive with him at once.

"You keep your energy for Wagner to-night," I demurred. "If the Reservists see you driving me round Athens in a carriage and pair, there may be a Royalist *coup d'état*."

Athanassaki was so bucked to find himself in uniform again that by the afternoon when he was off duty at the door of the Annexe he could not resist the temptation of taking a walk round the city to show himself off. Feeling the need for refreshment, he sat down outside a café and called for a drink. While he was basking in the thought of the triumphant arrests he had once upon a time made in uniform he heard some fellow at a neighbouring table make a derogatory remark about Venizelos. Indignant at the insult to his great compatriot Athanassaki spat

in the coffee of the calumniator to show what he thought of him. He followed up this expression of opinion by threatening the owner of the coffee with instant arrest. Two real gendarmes who were passing by stopped to inquire into the noisy argument, and one of them recognizing Athanassaki as an ex-member of the force demanded what he was doing in uniform. Athanassaki made some hubristic reply, on which he himself was immediately arrested by the newcomers and carried off to the nearest police-station. This put an end to his activities for the present and at the same time lost us the use of his uniform.

"Don't worry, Skipper," Bonaparte boomed, "I'll do the trick for you."

Ten minutes later Bonaparte appeared before us in the khaki of an ex-Royal Fusilier, his tunic hung with loops of corded string intended to represent aiguillettes.

"How's this, Skipper, for a gendarme?" he asked in his deepest voice, his chest swelling.

"Well, it may do in the dark," I replied. "But by daylight you look like a brown paper parcel which has burst its string."

About six o'clock Tucker came in with a grave face to say that the man who had hired the carriage to him now repented of his bargain and would not let us have it because he was afraid for his horses.

"The only remedy for that is to buy the carriage and pair," I said. "Pay him his price, and make him give you an agreement to buy it back to-morrow less the cost of the hire and any damage done."

I was really very much excited myself by this time; but we had had so many disappointments over the German mail that I dared not let myself hope too eagerly for success.

At nine o'clock Tucker drove off to the bottom of the street where Wagner was having supper with his fiancée and no doubt

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feeling a little nervous about the long, rough, and dangerous journey before him.

Between ten and eleven o'clock Chic came out to look for a carriage and called up Tucker. Wagner got in with his knapsack and two cushions. Tucker whipped up the horses, and off they went toward Pyrgos. So far so good. Tucker drove on and on for an hour. But there was no sign of any car. He wondered what had happened, and made an excuse to stop in order to take a stone out from the foot of one of the horses. The night was absolutely still, but he could hear no sound of an approaching car. After wasting as much time as he could he climbed up on the box again and drove to Pyrgos station, where he finally arrived after midnight without having seen a sign of the car.

Meanwhile, I was waiting down at the Annexe, telling myself what a fool I was to expect anything to come of the enterprise, and trying to concentrate on my novel, with which during my illness I had made a good deal of progress. Suddenly I heard the gates swing open and a car drive through, followed quickly by excited footsteps up the stairs. I rushed out to meet Zanardi, Poseidon, and Bonaparte, the last looking rather more like a real gendarme than when I had seen him in the afternoon.

"Have you stopped the carriage?" I asked.

"There has been no carriage," Zanardi exclaimed indignantly. "We are waiting two hours for Mr. Tucker, but he has never come past."

Poseidon twirled his long black moustaches and shook his sleek black head.

"We are waiting two hours, my captain, and now I am afraid it is for nothings."

"Tucker's made a muck of it," Bonaparte declared gloomily. "I knew he was going to make a muck of it. What did I say to you, Yanko? Didn't I say 'Tucker's mucked it'?"



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"That is quite right, Mr. Bonaparte," Poseidon agreed. "You have said to me that Mr. Tucker can have made one mistake."

It was certainly mysterious. An agent had seen Tucker start off with Wagner shortly after ten o'clock, and how the carriage had missed the car on what according to the map was the only road to Pyrgos was inexplicable.

"Well," I said, "the only thing you can do is to go back as quick as you can and see if you can find him."

Off they started again in the car, and not far out of Athens they met Tucker coming back with an empty carriage. There was a long and heated argument over which party had made the mistake. Tucker declared that he had driven straight to Pyrgos railway-station where Wagner had left the carriage and gone to lie down in the waiting-room until the train came in at dawn. The others argued that Tucker must have made a mistake, because they had been waiting on the Pyrgos road, and could not possibly have missed seeing him drive past if he really had driven past as he said.

"What do you mean, you silly fools, did I really drive past? How the hell did Wagner get to Pyrgos station if I didn't drive past? The bloody carriage didn't fly, did it?"

And then it was that Bonaparte, as he related afterwards with unctuous pride, saved the situation.

"Boys," he reported that he said, "while we're arguing here the Hun will escape us. Leave it all to the Sergeant. Are you game?"

"Game for what?" they asked.

"Game to stand by and watch Bonaparte do the trick? Tucker, you drive back to the Skipper and tell him you've left the job in charge of the Sergeant, and he'll have the Hun mail-bag if Bonaparte can get it for him."

So Tucker in a state of deep dejection drove back to Athens while the car drove on to Pyrgos. On reaching the

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railway-station Zanardi and Poseidon stayed inside while Bonaparte jumped up and hurried toward the waiting-room, where Wagner was lying on a bench with his head on the cushions. Bonaparte shook him. When the courier, dazed with sleep, sat up, he was urged to hurry along with him as fast as he could because the British were close behind, hoping to seize the German mail he was carrying. He added that he was the Chief of Police, who had been dispatched by special order from the Palace to take Wagner along to the Ministry of the Interior and send him up to Larissa with an armed escort.

Wagner, still dazed with sleep, followed Bonaparte outside and got into the waiting car, which at once set off at full speed back to Athens. As it fled past the Ministry of the Interior Wagner ventured to protest for the first time, asking why they did not stop.

"You must keep quiet, I think," said Poseidon gently.

But Wagner would not keep quiet. Indeed, he started to shout.

"So I must tap him on the head," Poseidon reported. "And after that he is very quiet, and we put him at the bottom of the car. Quiet, my captain, oh, yes, very quiet like a baby in the bed."

Thus did Poseidon describe to me afterwards his method of soothing Wagner's apprehensions.

Presently, however, the courier recovered from the tap and sat up again to ask where he was being taken. He was then told that he was being taken down to the *Piræus* to be put on board a destroyer; but he apparently found this incredible, and as he seemed inclined to start shouting again Bonaparte sat on his head until in the grey of dawn they reached Phaleron. Here he was bundled out of the car, pushed hastily into the waiting dinghy, and rowed off to the *Valkyrie*, where he was shut below in the cabin.

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In deference to the superstition that a watched pot never boils, I had left the Annexe after the car went off on the second trip, and at five o'clock I was roused from sleep with the news that the German mail was on my desk waiting for me to come down and examine its contents.

Even when upon my desk I saw the two cushions, one covered in a crimson and the other in a flowered cretonne, I could hardly believe that if they were slit open anything would be found inside except flock. Bonaparte, who in his gendarme's uniform was standing guard over them, assured me that he could feel the packets inside, and he kept squeezing the cushions like a child who delays plunging its hand into a Christmas stocking in order to gloat over the hidden contents. My praise of his initiative in bluffing Wagner out of the waiting-room and into the car he waved aside with a fat gesture, the implication of which was the inevitability of his perfect behaviour in any circumstances.

I slit the seam of the first cushion with a penknife and bade Bonaparte dip his hand into the flock stuffing. Not since Jack Horner can anyone have looked so supremely conscious of his own merit as Bonaparte looked that August morning when he pulled out an oblong bag of light oatmeal-coloured holland sewn up with string. The address was written on a square piece of paper and fixed to the bag by four blue wafers embossed in white with the Imperial Eagle surrounded by the words *Kaiserliche Deutsche Gesandtschaft in Athen*. The Imperial German Legation in Athens!

*Eilt sehr !*

*Sicher !*

*An den*

*Deutschen Nachrichten Offizier*

*Personlich*

*MONASTIR.*

*Kaiserl. Deutsche Marinesache.*

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or translated:

Very Urgent!

With Care!

To

The German Intelligence Officer

Personal

MONASTIR.

Imperial German Admiralty Bag.

On the other side was the same address printed in ink on the holland itself.

"Shall I cut the string?" Tucker asked in a tone that Atropos herself might have envied. He had by now recovered his dignity by finding that the car had waited for the carriage on a stretch of new road which was not marked on the map, and that it was not his fault they had missed one another.

Inside the holland bag there was a large orange envelope heavily sealed and addressed as above. Inside this again were several envelopes heavily sealed with Venetian-red wax on which the German Eagle flapped its wings in angry defiance. Some of these smaller envelopes were addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin, and one larger one to the Admiralty. The other cushion contained a bag of waterproof paper in which were a number of private letters for various addresses in Germany.

I sent round urgently to have Miss Chapman roused from bed in the Pension Merlin and fetched round to the Annexe as soon as possible, for she was our German translator. While we were waiting for her and Hasluck, who was to translate the Greek correspondence, Lafontaine and I set to work at once on the classification of the captured mail. In the envelope addressed to the Admiralty in Grancy's handwriting were nine sketch maps of various parts of the defences along the Suez Canal and elsewhere in Egypt. On one or two of them the spy had attempted to draw little pictures of soldiers in different uniforms,

presumably because he was unable to obtain the right regimental names. In this envelope was a smaller envelope addressed to H.I.H. Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse. I opened this and found a long letter inside written in English, and I had not read far before I realized with a shock that I was reading a letter from the Queen of the Hellenes to her sister. I at once put this letter on one side until I could consult Sir Francis Elliot about the way to handle it. In this same envelope was a letter from Grancy to say that he had nearly two hundred German, Austrian, Bulgarian, and Turkish telegrams which the Legations had not been able to send; but in another envelope he enclosed a number of cipher telegrams to be dispatched from Sofia. He mentioned that of the ciphers they used in Athens only the Cipher 2505 was still considered uncompromised. He also wrote that since he had first arrived in Athens the previous August his activities in a naval capacity had been slowly but surely restricted more and more successfully and that since the middle of July he had been able to do nothing. This was valid evidence that the arrest of Lestage and his associates a month ago had been a severe blow to the German Naval Intelligence.

Besides Grancy's letters there were interesting letters from von Falkenhausen in which he spoke of continually paying long and fruitful visits to the King, and of writing anonymous letters and military articles for the Greek newspapers. He declared that the mob of Allied troops in Salonica was incapable of an offensive; but the most significant item in any of Falkenhausen's letters was his mention of having proposed to the King an important line of action to which he had every hope of persuading His Majesty to agree. "I have a hard task before me," he wrote, "but I know how to proceed."

The following are extracts from a letter of John Theotokis, the Queen's Chamberlain, to his brother Nicolas Theotokis, the Greek Minister in Berlin:

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TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING YOURSELF: I had the good fortune to learn through a confidential communication of a very intimate friend of mine that Gennadios \* and Romanos,† to whom it appears were sent either copies or extracts of your report on the supply of food in Germany, have replied in a perfectly absurd manner. Gennadios says that the Minister in Berlin has asked to have sent him from London provisions for his personal use, but that at the same time he pretends the situation in Berlin is satisfactory, whereas he ought, in the position he holds, to form an independent judgment on these questions and not draw for his facts on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which will not give him accurate information. Gennadios takes advantage of the opportunity to make a long story about the certainty of the Allies' victory, the exhaustion of Germany, and the policy we ought to follow. Romanos' letter is nearly identical. This for your information. These gentlemen have largely contributed to the exasperation felt against us in Entente centres, and though I have continually pushed for their removal, the proposition has always been coldly received. Meanwhile, we have sunk to our present level. Indeed, the Minister in London has gone so far as to give away the cipher to the English.

Politis is secretly behind all this business. He ought to have been dismissed long since, particularly after . . . . . and his own political conduct in Corfu; but unluckily when this question came on the *tapis*, the people then in authority, because they could not find a suitable man to replace him and did not want to go further in the matter, urged it was indispensable that he should stay.

However, in spite of all the oppressive, brutal, and humiliating acts we and the Country have had to put up with, the Centre ‡ remains unchanged and exercises and has exercised its influence everywhere since of course it is the Centre which gives the tone.

\* The Greek Minister in London.

† The Greek Minister in Paris.

‡ The King.

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TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION FROM GYPARIS: In a recent telegram of his Gypris \* represents the situation in Austria as lamentable: in brief, that the reserves are considerably depleted, that the question of supplies presents many difficulties, and that the general situation is bad. He adds, however, that the entry of Roumania into the War cannot be regarded as imminent, but that after the harvest the question may possibly be reopened.

THE PRINCES' TOUR: All the discussions, interviews, and conversations they had were cordial in Russia and England, and in both countries they obtained definite promises that the dynasty should be respected, and other assurances of a similar nature. In both countries it was emphasized that the Allies could not permit German influence in Greece to be daily extended by means of their propaganda, unchecked. To this they replied that the English and French organizations in Athens were much stronger than the German. The people in London were unable to refute this with definite arguments. When the action of the Entente Ministers in Athens was set forth at length, they professed in London entire ignorance of what was going on.

Generally, however, the conversations in London were cordial, and Andrew showed himself an abler diplomat there than Nicholas in Petrograd, not as regards the carrying out of the instructions, but in the manner of communicating his answers, since the first telegraphs in detail what they said to him, whereas the second aims at developing his own replies at great length and puts what was said to him (which is really a good deal more important) quite briefly. Moreover, Andrew was completely successful in much more unfavourable conditions.

In France things were much more difficult, for though Briand was quite cordial and agreed to everything, Poincaré was quite definitely unpleasant. But in any case there too we have a success to signal if we reckon the recall of Guillemin.

Andrew is now in Paris, where he will await the arrival of the French Minister from Athens, so that the latter may not undo what he has succeeded in doing. He will also perhaps go to London again, where he has hitherto completely ignored

\* The Greek Minister in Vienna.

Gennadios. The latter was not even informed of his conversations with King George, reports of which were transmitted through the Ministry of Marine. I do not go into details as these are of no use to you: when you get this letter a month hence we may hope that the situation will be different. I repeat, however, that both have been completely successful, and on one particular point Andrew succeeded in converting (King) George.

**BALKAN FRONT:** After the arrival of the Russians (not many of them) and the completion of their preparations, it seems that the Allies are seriously thinking of an attack on this front also. This attack as we notified you was decided for the 2nd August (new style) and then put off for a later date. We shall see if they will really try to carry it out now.

**INTERNAL SITUATION:** This is going satisfactorily. The current of feeling against M. Venizelos and his policy grows stronger every day, and the Elections will certainly be held on September 25th. Unluckily Venizelos foresees defeat and has begun once more seriously to consider abstention: to-day it is announced that if he is rejected on his tour he will abstain, whereas it would be to our advantage for him to come to the polls himself and expose himself to defeat: then the Entente will understand the real inclinations of the Greek people. Let him only get a majority in the districts occupied by the French! Corfu for instance will be a regular surprise. It is a pity you are not there at this moment yourself. The current of popular feeling there cannot be checked despite all efforts, and Zavitsianos cannot find Corfiote candidates to make up his group; he could only find Palatianos the Doctor, Peliadis (his son-in-law), L. Kogevina (his was the only house that had a flag out on July 14th): no one else. He is trying to make up his group with a man from Santa Mavra and has gone there with that object.

**THEFT FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS:** It seems that the 1,000 marks you sent and another 50 drachmas were stolen from the forwarding office. Of course there was a great scandal and no end of things were written, *inter alia*, that the envelope for the Legation which the attaché Diamandopoulos was to take had been opened: but this was not so. For the



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future no foreigners' letters are to be carried except those addressed to exalted personages, our own private letters, and those of the service, as otherwise we may give rise to great unpleasantness merely by making ourselves agreeable and for no other reason.

CONVERSATION OF THE KING OF SPAIN WITH CONSUL-GENERAL PERIBOLAROPOULOS: It appears, if what the Consul-General has communicated to us is exact, that King Alphonso expressed his admiration of His Majesty, stating that he was entirely of opinion that the policy he has kept to is the right one, that neutrals should remain neutral and combine, and that for the future they must stand by one another: and finally that we must considerably develop by common agreement the resources of our mercantile marine, so that after the War it may be able to hold the field.

I end here for to-day: before the courier leaves, I will add any political news there may be.

AUGUST 16th:

The recall of the Frenchman has been put off on account of the indiscretions of our Press which is always making a muddle of things. The recall was an accomplished fact. They began to attack him, and so it was revoked.

Yesterday we had much anxiety on account of rumoured concentrations. On this subject we sent you a telegram: I hope you received it and understood that instead of addressing your answer to the King you must address it with 2 W's only, for these you will now substitute 3 A's and we when we have anything to conceal will address you with 3 BB's. On this subject, I gave you detailed information in my letter No. 9. In connexion with this we had the following frightful shock yesterday, and you can imagine our anxiety. Before the departure of your new attaché Diamandopoulos, I handed him a large envelope containing the document numbered 145 of the 11/24th July, in which was mentioned the enclosure of various letters. The latter gentleman did not leave till July 20/Aug. 2, having given out all round that he was leaving. To be brief, they stopped him in Italy between Rome and Switzerland and

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demanding what he had on him: he showed his papers as 'Courrier du Cabinet' but they insisted on his handing over the envelope which, like a fool, he did. The envelope thus got into Italian hands and is now at the Consulta OPEN !

The worst of this is that the envelope also contained:

(i) A personal letter to you (No. 9) in which there is a detailed description of the fire: I also sent you a lot of political news in it. In the same personal letter was an envelope addressed to you personally from the Queen. In this were enclosed:

(1) A letter to Princess Marguerite

(2) 3 letters for officers of the Queen's Regiment

(3) and a letter to Metternich, Ambassador at Constantinople.

Her Majesty wrote some confidential matters with her own hand.

(ii) Envelope containing a lot of letters to you from different people here.

(iii) Envelope containing letters of various Germans to their families.

You can understand that when the President summoned me to the Ministry and made the announcement to me he put a bomb to my head.

I have just seen Koromilas'\* telegram. He quite rightly blames the Ministry for not having warned him of Diamandopoulos' passage in good time, and for not marking the letter as 'official' etc., etc. Finally he says he is trying anyway to get back the envelope which contains the document, but he is afraid he will not succeed. In this case he was advised (by Politis of course, who has been talking a lot of rubbish) that if the Italians absolutely refused to give it up, to propose that the personal letters should be opened in his presence and the contents destroyed.

I was always afraid that the Italians would play us some trick, and my fears have been realized. From now onward, I shall write you no more letters, not even a news letter of a personal character, unless I have an absolutely sure medium not passing through Italy.

\* Greek Minister in Rome.

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This time, though I handed over the envelope to Diamandopoulos on the 12/25th July, as he was always postponing his journey, I sent by another way two envelopes (Nos. 10 and 11) containing letters and one document (No. 149) on the 15th July. As soon as you receive these and any other communication sent by regular post, please acknowledge by telegram, as also the receipt of this.

To-day I am still furious and there is nothing for it but patience, which will put an end to this as to many other anxieties.

But take care not to send anything for foreigners with your mail. Mr. Arnidis escaped by a hair's breadth: they asked for him on the boat, but luckily they had hidden him.

. . . and mind what you write and send in future, because I am afraid the official mail-bags will be opened one day.

It may be imagined with what urgency after reading this letter I begged Sir Francis to telegraph directly to Sir Rennell Rodd in Rome, urging that every argument must be used to prevent the mail's being restored to Diamandopoulos.

Alas, it was too late. The Greek Minister in Rome had sworn a solemn oath that the Attaché was carrying nothing except official Greek dispatches to the Legation in Berlin, and on receiving this assurance the Italian officials at the Consulta had given way.

Mombelli telegraphed urgently to the Comando Supremo in the hope of stopping Diamandopoulos on the frontier again; but he had already crossed into Switzerland by the time the telegram reached Italy, and the contents of Document 145 were never to be known. There was evidence in another letter of the vital importance it was to what Theotokis calls 'the Centre' that this document should escape capture.

The telegram about rumoured concentrations and the replies from Berlin may be found in the Greek White Book \* :

\* Translated from the French Edition by Theodore P. Ion and Carrol N. Brown. (Oxford Univ. Press, American Branch.)

## AUGUST

No. 55: His Majesty King Constantine to Mr. N. Theotoky, Minister of Greece at Berlin:

Athens, August 2/15, 1916.

I have been informed by the German military attaché very confidentially and without further details that the Germans are getting together two armies against Roumania under the command of Mackensen. Can you learn the reason? Is it a sign that they have decided to act against Roumania in order to prevent a possible attack if she does not disarm?

King Constantine.

P.S. of Mr. J. Theotoky, Master of Ceremonies at the Court of Queen Sophie:

Do not send dispatches in the name of his Majesty the King but put as address only two W's. Affectionately

Theotoky.

No. 56: Mr. N. Theotoky, Minister of Greece at Berlin to His Majesty King Constantine at Athens:

Berlin, Aug. 3/16, 1916.

I have the honour to inform you, in reply to your telegram dated yesterday, that according to positive information there is no intention, for the present, of taking the initiative in attacking Roumania; the concentration of troops opposite Roumania is made for the purpose of intimidating her. It has, however, been decided to attack her if she takes any aggressive measures against Austria, but there is no reason to believe that she will do so.

On the contrary, the army under Mackensen will at once undertake an offensive against the army of the Entente in Macedonia as a reprisal to the action of that army against the Bulgarian front. I do not know whether this action will be definite and rapid. I suppose that it will rather be only partial. Von Bethmann Hollweg has to-day telegraphed to Count von Mirbach to communicate to (illegible words) this intention of the German Supreme Command, repeating to him the assurance that the guarantees and assurances given (illegible words) are maintained in their integrity.

## GREEK MEMORIES

No. 57: Mr. N. Theotoky, Minister of Greece at Berlin, to His Majesty King Constantine at Athens:

Berlin, August 5/18, 1916.

Von Jagow has informed me confidentially and for the personal information of Your Majesty that the concentration of troops against Roumania is intended chiefly to intimidate her. Germany and her Allies have decided not to take the initiative in attacking her. If Roumania permits the passage of Russian troops through her territory, or if she makes the slightest gesture against Austria or Bulgaria, then they will attack her immediately. Von Jagow continues to believe that Roumania has been joking and that she will not move. . . .

Theotoky.

The anxiety was probably caused by fear that this concentration against Roumania might interfere with the plan for the Bulgarians to overrun Macedonia and so deprive Venizelos of about sixty certain seats.

The confidence of Theotokis about the results of the general election was not shared by other correspondents. One, indeed, actually mentioned that the belief of Theotokis that Venizelos was losing ground every day was a case of the wish being father to the thought and that unless strong measures were taken he must inevitably win the elections, which would mean war, since the country believed now that the Entente was going to win.

I will comment on one or two other letters when the events they seem to foreshadow are being related.

The most immediate problem connected with the bag was what to do with the letter from the Queen of Greece. Finally, Sir Francis Elliot decided that it should be sent with the rest of the captured mail to C in London. Apparently, when the captured bag reached London C sent the contents across to the Director of Military Intelligence at the War Office. From the War Office the Queen's letter was hurriedly taken over to the Foreign Office, where its arrival caused acute embarrassment.

Lord Hardinge telegraphed to Sir Francis Elliot that a letter written by Her Majesty the Queen of the Hellenes to Her Imperial Highness Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse had just been sent across from the War Office. He presumed that this letter had been contained in a Greek mail recently seized and that it had been opened by Captain Compton Mackenzie. He thought this was most unfortunate in view of the fact that both H.M. the Queen of the Hellenes and H.I.H. Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse were cousins of His Majesty King George. There were no grounds whatever for opening such a letter, which should have been immediately returned to the Queen, unopened. Sir Francis Elliot must immediately return the letter himself with a full and frank apology and make the best he could of a bad business.

To this telegram Sir Francis Elliot replied that the letter from the Queen had been in a German bag not a Greek bag, and that the letter was enclosed in an envelope addressed to the German Admiralty containing nine sketch maps of the Suez Canal Defences. Mackenzie, not knowing the hand-writing, had opened the letter and had shown the contents only to him. He suggested that since Her Imperial Highness, although a cousin of His Majesty King George, was also like the Queen of Greece a sister of the Kaiser, and that since she was an enemy living in the enemy's country the letter should be sent on to Her Imperial Highness through one of the neutral Governments together with most of the other letters that were seized. He reminded Lord Hardinge that this was the procedure adopted by the Austrians with the letters taken from the bag carried by Captain Stanley Wilson.

Lord Hardinge would not agree to this, and in the end the letter was sent back by Sir Francis Elliot to the Queen, who wrote him a kind and gracious letter to say she perfectly understood how everything had happened.

The desire not to make use of the Queen's letter for propaganda was natural enough; but to refuse to allow any use to be made of the other letters was an exaggerated squeamishness, and the instructions I received forbidding me to communicate the contents of the bag to the French Intelligence created a certain amount of ill-feeling. As a matter of fact, I had already communicated the contents to the French before such instructions were received, though of course I had excepted the Queen's letter. The French were very decent about it, and in order to avoid possible trouble for myself they did not publish any of the contents of the bag.

The effect of this sensitiveness to the feelings of those they considered enemies was to confirm the French in their belief that the object of British policy was to thwart French policy in every direction, and from now on I was to find it increasingly difficult to prevent de Roquefeuil's getting the bit between his teeth and taking complete control of the situation in Greece.

Lord Hardinge himself was less fortunate over his private correspondence. Some time after this a British bag to Russia was captured by a German submarine, and a letter of his to Sir George Buchanan was published in many neutral papers.

After the problem of disposing of the Queen's letter the next problem was how to dispose of the captured courier. As described to me by Bonaparte he was one of the most desperate characters in the Western hemisphere, a man who would not have hesitated to blow up his mother with dynamite and who had been a mainspring of German activity in Greece since the outbreak of war.

On the day after his capture I went down to interview this desperado on board the *Valkyrie*, which by now Rogers had brought round to the outer harbour of the Piræus. In the little cabin which I had visited first when Tucker had handed over the bombs for the attempted destruction of the Kuleli Burgas

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Bridge a year ago I found an undersized delicate-looking creature in a state of utter despair over his own stupidity. I examined him at length about his life in Athens and discovered that it had been clearly and completely innocuous. His chief anxiety was lest he should be suspected of having betrayed the mail to us. Being anxious myself to avoid any trouble with the Greek Government over his capture in Athens, I told Wagner that his best plan was to say that he had been captured by a Serbian cavalry patrol beyond Calambaka. At least a fortnight would elapse before the Germans would know that their mail had been captured, and by that time I hoped to have the courier safely installed in Malta for the rest of the War. This prospect did not please him at first, because for the last twenty-four hours he had been steadily sea-sick, poor little man, and the notion of a voyage to Malta was more than he could bear. However, that was his final destination, and when I passed through Malta myself a few weeks later I found him happy and healthy and comfortable. I did not let him know that his future brother-in-law had betrayed him with the connivance of his future wife; but I was told that shortly after he went to Malta she married somebody else.

### POLITICS AND PANIC

It will probably be for ever impossible to extract from the mass of rumours, counter-rumours, lies, contradictions and muddles an absolutely accurate account of events in Greece during this August, but I will contribute my quota in the hope that some clear-headed historian of the future may find it of use to him.

On August 2nd General Sarrail planned an offensive in Macedonia which was to coincide with the entry of Roumania into the War. On August 5th Roumanian participation was postponed. It is odd that Sir Basil Thomson should state \* that

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 124.



General Sarraïl launched his Macedonian offensive on August 2nd, for that was the date which as we have seen in Theotokis' letter was notified to Germany by the 'Centre'.

When no offensive was launched on August 2nd, and when Roumania did not enter the War on August 5th, Falkenhausem after a consultation with the King probably telegraphed to Berlin that the situation could still be saved, and from his letters taken in the bag it is fairly clear that he intended to ask the King what would be his attitude if a successful offensive in Macedonia by the Central Powers opened the way to Athens. It is possible that this was discussed even earlier, and that the Document 145 which we failed to secure in Italy contained a discussion of this very proposal. This was indeed definitely asserted to me by somebody very high up in Greek politics, after Venizelos had left Athens toward the end of September. But let me make it clear that I have no means of confirming this story, and that it is to be regarded not as a fact but as one of several possible theories.

General Sarraïl's offensive actually began on August 10th, apparently without the least idea that the Germans and Bulgarians were preparing an offensive of their own, the result of which the King was awaiting in Athens. If the Macedonian offensive were successful it might easily mean that Roumania would not come in at all this year.

The Germano-Bulgarian attack began. Sarraïl was taken by surprise. Florina was occupied, and direct communication between Athens and Berlin was re-established. At this time Falkenhausem certainly discussed with members of the Greek General Staff the possibility of a raid on Athens. I did not believe then and I do not believe now that any such raid ever passed beyond discussion as a pleasant possibility; but Athens was reduced to such a state of hysterical panic during the last week of August that I could not positively contradict what seemed

a quite fantastic notion. Royalists and Venizelists were equally excited, the Royalists because they thought that General Sarraïl was going to march down and occupy Athens and seize them, the Venizelists because they thought that German cavalry was going to make a raid on Athens and seize them. Then the wires between Athens and Larissa ceased to function, which heightened the Venizelist panic. Then Politis, the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, drove to Phaleron with a warning for the Russian Minister not to travel to Salonica as he was intending, because German pickets had actually been seen outside Larissa. Prince Demidoff was sufficiently impressed by this news to postpone his journey. As usual at moments like this German and Austrian military and naval officers were as thick in Athens as Russians were in England at the beginning of the War. The French Intelligence insisted that there were forty of them, but I was unable to discover one, and I telegraphed accordingly to London.

I had no sooner sent this reassuring telegram than Captain Maroudas, the Chief of the official secret police, not the Palace police which was another body of secret police, warned me with tears in his eyes that the heads of the Greek General Staff contemplated a *coup d'état*, and begged me to keep in personal touch with him three times a day. Meanwhile, the Bulgarians were advancing through Eastern Macedonia, and by August 24th they were already on the outskirts of Cavalla.

At this moment the panic which had taken possession of the Venizelists was transferred to the Royalists, who heard that a French fleet was concentrating at Melos, and that troops were actually being embarked at Salonica for Athens. At the same time M. Guillemin was giving positive assurances that Roumania had already declared war on Austria. It was vital for Sir Francis Elliot if he was to handle the situation in Greece to be sure that the entry of Roumania so often rumoured was

this time a fact. Yet, although he telegraphed repeatedly for information to the Foreign Office, he was told nothing.

On Sunday, August 27th, there was a great Venizelist demonstration when over fifty-five thousand people listened to the speech in which Venizelos solemnly warned the King what might happen if he continued to surrender to the Bulgarians. On Monday, August 28th, there was a counter-demonstration by the Gounarists, but it was a feeble affair, and consisted chiefly of depressed-looking peasants who had been brought in from Bœotia and Attica, hardly any of whom were able to read Mackensen's proclamation in Greek which was distributed to them.

The King was announced to be ill. General Dousmanis, the Chief of the General Staff, was dismissed by Royal decree and replaced by General Moschopoulos following upon the authoritative announcement that Roumania had entered the War against the Central Powers. This was published by the *Patris* while the Gounarist demonstration was proceeding; but another two days were allowed to elapse before the Foreign Office remembered to inform the British Legation in Athens.

There was a general feeling now that Greece must become belligerent, and the only problem seemed the reconciliation of the King and Venizelos for the good of the country. The King was anxious to hold the election as soon as possible now that the Bulgarian advance into Eastern Macedonia, by robbing Venizelos of so many prospective seats, had given the Gounarists a good chance of victory at the polls. The King would in that case be able to deny that he had been forced into the War by Venizelos, and he would be able to assume all the credit for having entered at the right moment. Personally, I had no more belief in his intention to enter now than at any other time; but Sir Francis was particularly optimistic, and at ten o'clock on

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the morning of the 1st of September he went off to have an audience with His Majesty.

Before Sir Francis returns from that audience it will be advisable to pick up a few stray threads so as not to interrupt the narrative of the dramatic events in September.

### THE TIGHTENING OF CONTROL

Throughout August Rogers had been developing his Port Control at the Piræus with such masterly efficiency that at last it was felt that we might make a move to check cargoes loading and sailing for Greece in the same way as we were now checking passengers. The control of Greek exports and imports had long been exercised by the Commercial Department of the British Legation; but that had not prevented Greek merchant ships from being stopped by British patrols and often being taken into Mudros or other ports to be detained indefinitely for search. This right of search was sometimes used unreasonably and tactlessly, and it was a source of great annoyance to Greek shipowners, who were almost unanimously devoted adherents of the Allies. I suggested to Sells that we could do much to reward and secure the goodwill of the Greek shipping interests if we could devise some method of avoiding these arbitrary stoppages at sea, and the frequent delays before the voyage could proceed. I suggested that Rogers should now extend his organization at the Piræus and assume responsibility for every cargo shipped from there. My idea was that after a strict search by qualified officials he should be empowered to give a certificate to every outgoing ship that she was carrying nothing beyond her alleged cargo, and that if such a vessel were stopped by a patrol ship this certificate on being shown should entitle her to proceed at once on her voyage without further search and the vexatious incidental delays such a search usually entailed.

Sells took the matter up with the Vice-Admiral at Mudros,

and an arrangement was finally made by which the Navy agreed to exempt from search any ship whose captain could produce the certificate of the Piræus Port Control. In order to strengthen this I asked for more officers so that the same stringent control might be applied at other Greek ports on the mainland, particularly at Patras. Further, it was understood that the Vice-Admiral commanding the *Ægean Squadron* would use his good offices to induce Gibraltar to accept our certificate. The Commercial Department of the British Legation concurred with this arrangement and handed over their contraband organization down at the Piræus to work in conjunction with Rogers.

Sir Francis Elliot was inclined at first to think that we were exceeding our prerogatives; but I was able to point out that we had not attempted to claim any right to check the outgoing cargo of a Greek ship. All we did was to offer to any Greek ship that wanted a quick passage across the Mediterranean a way of securing that quick passage, and our search was to be initiated only at the instance of the Greek shipowners themselves.

When these negotiations had been successfully carried through and our Control of the Port of Piræus was imposed, without either ruffling the susceptibilities of the Greek Government or arousing the smallest protest even from the Government Press, I made up my mind to try to control the neutral passenger traffic, which at present was beyond our reach. With this end in view I invited a deputation of the leading Greek shipowners to a meeting, at which I put before them the following proposals:

"Gentlemen, you are," I said, "completely satisfied with the way our cargo supervision is working, and since it has been working you have not had to complain of arbitrary or vexatious stoppages on the high seas, often ending in your ships being taken into Mudros and elsewhere and there detained at the pleasure of the Naval Authorities; but what we cannot do, so long as you carry passengers without the visa of the Military Control Office

in Athens, is to guarantee that your ship will not be stopped and searched for suspected passengers. We cannot enforce the visa of the Passport Control Office upon neutrals, and so long as we cannot do this it will inevitably happen that we must sometimes take advantage of the high seas to interfere with neutral suspects to the best of our ability. That means more delay for your ships. Suppose, however, you were to announce that you would not give a passage to any person who could not satisfy your pursers that his passport held the visa of the Military Control Office in Athens, it would be perfectly easy for me to guarantee you that your ships should not be stopped for the examination of any credentials of passengers you are carrying on the high seas."

The Greek shipowners voted this a splendid idea, and immediately agreed to do what I suggested.

"But mind," I insisted, "you must not give the slightest impression that I have tried to force this restriction upon you. You must send me a formal notification that you intend to make it a rule that you will not accept as a passenger anybody whose passport is not endorsed by the Military Control Office in Athens, and formally ask me if I will do my best to guarantee your ships against being searched for passengers on the high seas."

In due course the Greek shipowners made a rule that their ships would not carry passengers without the visa of the Military Control Office.

About a week after this rule had been put into effect and the Piræus had been made an even more difficult harbour to get out of than any Allied port, so effective was Rogers's administration and so efficient was the work of the Control Office in Athens, a telegram arrived from Sir Edward Grey to say that the American Ambassador had just visited the Foreign Office to complain that I had refused to allow two American citizens,

one of whom was a Secretary of the American Legation in Athens, to leave Greece. Sir Edward Grey added that he could hardly believe that what he implied was such an insensate act had been committed, but that Sir Francis Elliot was to telegraph immediately the facts of what was a most disturbing case. In conclusion it was stressed in the telegram that at this particular moment it was imperative to do nothing to upset the United States Government.

I pointed out to Sir Francis Elliot that if the owners of a Greek liner declined to accept a passenger it was their own private business and had nothing whatever to do with the Government in Washington or with the Foreign Office. I promised that I would do what I could in the special circumstances to persuade them to make an exception in favour of these two American citizens; though, I added, it seemed rather unreasonable to expect them to favour American citizens above those of any other nationality, their own included.

On inquiring further into the matter I found that the two American travellers had been told politely that no Greek ship cared to accept any passenger without the visa of the Military Control Office in Athens. They had then complained to Mr. Droppers, the American Minister in Athens, who on being informed that it was advisable to apply for my visa had exclaimed that he would sooner apply to the devil in hell for a visa. Not finding this official available, he had telegraphed a protest to Washington. The authorities there had at once instructed their Ambassador in London to make a protest to Sir Edward Grey.

In the end the two American citizens sent their passports round for the Military Control visas and sailed for New York without further trouble. Whether or not this incident delayed the entry of America into the War by many months, history will decide.

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All this extension of Control was gratifying, but it involved a good deal of work and a good deal of money. So toward the end of August I asked Sir Francis Elliot to support my request for three thousand pounds to meet our expenses in September. The Foreign Office apparently thought that this extra money was to be used for bribing the Greek electors, and demurred at the amount. On this Sir Francis Elliot telegraphed back that the following sums had been cashed monthly through the National Bank by the German Legation: In January 44,000 marks, in February 24,000 marks, in March 45,000 marks, in April 45,000 marks, in May 42,000 marks, in June 803,000 marks, in July 750,000 marks. It will be noticed that as soon as the Greek Government accepted the demand for a new election the sums were very much larger.

*At the end of April, the telegram continued, Esslin, a German-Greek lawyer, took over the control of finance from Schenck, and similar encashments were made at the Popular and Commercial Banks. Besides the above about 6,000,000 marks have been paid out this year, though detailed information is lacking. In consideration of the above I think that Mackenzie's modest demand for £3,000 monthly might have your support. The expenses of the Passport Office and Control work are growing very heavy and stationery alone costs forty pounds a month.*

The reply to this, if it could be counted a reply, was a telegram to say it was now felt in London that the Athens organization had grown too large and too important for an officer of my rank, and that Lieutenant-Colonel Plunkett was being sent out to take charge. This was not intended to reflect in any way on the services of Captain Compton Mackenzie, who would remain in Athens as Assistant Military Attaché.

The revival of this post for me looked like interference by the War Office.



Colonel Plunkett \* had been Military Attaché to the British Legations in Greece and Serbia at the time when war broke out, and Sir Francis Elliot had never forgiven him for going up to Belgrade to watch the action between the Austrians and the Serbians and getting a stray bullet in his behind. For my own part, if anybody was going to be sent out to Athens to supersede me, I would have been superseded by 'Plunks' more willingly than by most. He was a kind and lovable creature, of whom I had affectionate memories from Gallipoli. Sir Francis, however, was determined if possible not to have Plunkett, and he telegraphed to say that it had been pointed out as long ago as January how important Athens was bound to be as a centre, that most of what I had asked for then had only been obtained by me now after eight months of very arduous work, that the large size of the organization was entirely due to my energy in building it up, that the rank of Lieutenant had been considered good enough for me up to the end of July, and that the simplest thing to do was to grant me the rank of Lieut.-Colonel immediately.

To this the Foreign Office replied that War Office principles of seniority must be respected, and that Colonel Plunkett would arrive in September.

That drew from Sir Francis Elliot a private telegram of protest, which may be rendered roughly:

*God help us if War Office principles of seniority are always to prevail. The new arrangement shall of course be given a fair trial and there will be a loyal attempt here to make it work. A change of status for Mackenzie will cause some confusion. His signature as Control Officer is known all over Europe. Why should not he and Colonel Plunkett both be Military Control Officers? There seems no reason to limit the number.*

\* The late Brig.-General E. A. Plunkett, C.B.E. *Gallipoli Memories*, p. 150, etc.

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A week later Lord Hardinge telegraphed back that Sir Francis Elliot's suggestion for both Lieutenant-Colonel Plunkett and Captain Compton Mackenzie to be Military Control Officers was approved. He then went on in the same telegram to say that except for an application of £2,000 a month referred to him and not sanctioned (with the Secretary of State's approval), because it seemed to be required for election purposes, which would be against His Majesty's Government's declared policy, he was not aware that any application for funds had been refused.

In the third week of August the following notice in English and in French was printed in all the Greek newspapers:

### NOTICE

All persons travelling by sea-routes are notified that they should be in possession of a passport or official certificate of identity in proper order bearing their photograph and duly endorsed with the control visa of the Anglo-French Control Bureau of ATHENS, otherwise they are liable to expose themselves to great inconvenience and delay.

Forms of application for Control Visas are held at the disposition of intending travellers who should apply personally at the Anglo-French Bureau ATHENS or at the Branch office of the Bureau at PIRÆUS.

The above measure will come into force on August 19th/September 1st, 1916.

COMPTON MACKENZIE,  
Captain R.M.,  
MILITARY CONTROL OFFICER,  
BRITISH LEGATION.

J. HEURTEL,  
Enseigne de Vaisseau,  
FOR MILITARY CONTROL OFFICER,  
FRENCH LEGATION.

## CHAPTER IX: SEPTEMBER

### THE FLEET ARRIVES

AT half-past eleven on the morning of September 1st, de Roquefeuil arrived at the Annexe portentous with unrevealed secrets. After wandering up and down my room for a minute or two he suddenly stopped and asked for my promise not to mention to anybody a word of something he wished to tell me until that something was a *fait accompli*. I gave him the promise, whereupon he announced that at four o'clock that afternoon the Allied Fleet would arrive off Piræus. I really do not think I have ever felt so completely surprised in my life.

"But what for?" I gasped.

"I have no time to tell you now. I must make all my arrangements. Please come round to the French School presently and we shall have a consultation."

"But look here," I protested, "you can't include Sir Francis in that promise I just made you. It would place me in an impossible position. I must tell him."

After a momentary hesitation de Roquefeuil agreed to this, and as soon as he had left the Annexe I hurried round to the Legation.

The British Minister had just come back from that audience with the King, during which the usual vague assurances of sympathy and of help had been given.

He was upstairs in his own library with Colonel Fairholme when I arrived, and the news about the arrival of the Fleet surprised him as much as it had surprised me. I am under the impression that he picked up his top-hat and threw it on the

floor; but I will not pledge the accuracy of my memory that this was the occasion on which he threw his hat about. He had reason to be angry. He had just had an hour's interview with the King, from which he had come away feeling hopeful that all misunderstandings would within a short time be removed, and that Great Britain and Greece in perfect harmony would move forward together along the road to victory. He had assured the King that he would do everything to discourage the handing in of any more humiliating Notes, and in his anxiety for that reconciliation between the King and Venizelos on which he had set his heart he was inclined to believe that the reconciliation had already been half effected. Now the King would suppose that throughout the audience he had been aware the Allied Fleet was already on its way to make a demonstration before his capital. His Majesty would never believe the British Minister had been in complete ignorance that the British Fleet was on its way to the Piræus.

Sir Francis Elliot went fuming to the Chancery where he sat down to draft an exasperated telegram to the Foreign Office asking for what reason the Fleet was coming to the Piræus, why he had not been advised beforehand of its coming, and suggesting that if possible the whole operation should be cancelled immediately in view of the fact that the King had never shown himself so amenable as this morning. He had just finished a draft of this when Mavrogordato, the Correspondent of Reuter's, sent in his card to say that a large fleet of warships had just arrived off the Piræus and to ask if the British Minister could give him any information for the Press. I left Sir Francis dancing about the Chancery and drove up to the French School where I found de Roquefeuil in a state of great excitement, rather like a small boy who has suddenly thrown a stone into a drawing-room window, broken some valuable china, and is not sure whether to laugh or to cry.

He then told me the demands that the Admiral intended to impose were:

1. The control of the Posts and Telegraphs.
2. The expulsion of the chief German agents from Greece.
3. The occupation by the French of all interned German and Austrian ships.

"The Admiral intends to impose?" I asked sharply.

"Why, yes, it is time that we finish with these diplomats," said de Roquefeuil. "From now we shall always demand everything through the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Squadron, Admiral Dartige du Fournet."

It began to look as if the French design to establish a political and commercial supremacy over Greece was going to be taken a long step on the way toward accomplishment. No wonder the Foreign Office had felt so sheepish over its pusillanimity that it had not even notified Sir Francis Elliot of this intention to exchange for diplomatic persuasion the speech of action.

De Roquefeuil asked me what dispositions I intended to make to prevent the escape of the Germans and the German agents. I was annoyed to hear that Ricaud who had been away would not be back for a day or two, because de Roquefeuil evidently was too much excited to be capable of thinking out a coherent plan of action. He asked me if I had a list of names of the Germans and Greeks who merited expulsion, for he was eager to send a list to the Admiral that very afternoon so that they might be got rid of at once. I told him it was impossible for me to draw up a list as quickly as that, whereupon he produced a French list of undesirables. I read through this with some dismay, for it hardly contained a single name correctly spelt or a single address correctly given. Moreover, here and there mixed up with the names of police spies and third-rate journalists were the names of Greek officers of high rank and Cabinet Ministers, not to mention all the officials of the enemy

Legations. I insisted that he must give me time to revise the list before it was sent in, unless the whole business was to be a farce.

The next concern was how to guard the roads out of Athens to prevent the escape of undesirables. De Roquefeuil told me he had made arrangements to guard the Tatöi road and the Larissa road, and asked me if I would make myself responsible for the Cephissia road, which I agreed to do. I also offered to make myself responsible for watching Schenck's house, Hoffmann's house, and the German Legation itself. This being the first of the month, and the money for September not having yet arrived, I had to borrow 15,000 francs from de Roquefeuil with which to pay for the necessary motor-cars and the extra men. I then left the French School and went back to the Legation, where I explained to Sir Francis Elliot the fatuity of the French list they were proposing to send in, and said I would try by the end of the afternoon to produce a more or less practicable list of people to be expelled.

De Roquefeuil's original list was sent down to Admiral Dartige du Fournet, which accounts for the latter's remarks\* about the absurdity of it. Yet the Admiral himself was anxious to send that very list in, and he much resented its being radically amended by myself. However, in the end an accurate list was handed in after Sir Francis Elliot had threatened to dissociate the British Intelligence Department from the original French list and send in a separate one. The only agent for whom I asked special exemption from expulsion at the time the demand was made was Hoffmann. I said that, unless he was handed over to us for deportation to Malta, I should prefer his expulsion not to be demanded, since we could deal with his activities more easily in Athens than if he were to take up his abode in Switzerland.

About six o'clock that afternoon one of our agents, who had

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral*, pp. 122-3.

been watching the German Legation, reported at the Annexe that the German Minister, Falkenhausen, and another German not absolutely identified, but supposed to be one of the officers of the *Marienbad*, had left the Legation in a motor-car and that our Maltese agent Zammit had followed them in another car. There were thirteen German and Austrian ships interned either at Eleusis or the Piræus, all of which, by the terms of the Note, were to be handed over to the French Admiral at once. Of these by far the most important was the 11,000-ton *Marienbad* moored at Eleusis.

At eight o'clock Zammit returned to report that he had followed the German car as far as the seashore at Scaramanga, which lies just where the road to Eleusis turns round to the right out of the Vale of Daphne.\* He said that the occupants of the German car had remained on the seashore signalling for about half an hour with a flashlamp and that finally a motor-boat had put off from the *Marienbad* and taken them on board. He apologized for not having stopped them, and said that he should have tried to do so if he had not been afraid that he might be laid out and that I should not know what was going on. I at once sent off six men in another car to try to cut off the enemy on the way back; but they missed him. So at ten o'clock I went up to de Roquefeuil at the French School and asked why the *Marienbad* had not been seized at the same time as the interned ships at the Piræus. He said that the Admiral's intention was to wait until the morning to seize the *Marienbad*. I told him what had happened at Scaramanga and urged that unless steps were taken to seize the vessel immediately, it might be too late, because I felt convinced that the intention of the enemy was to blow up so large and valuable a ship rather than let her fall into the hands of the French. De Roquefeuil wirelessly my information to the French Admiral and urged

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 49.

him to send off a boarding-party at once; but the Admiral replied that he had made his own arrangements and required no advice from the Naval Attaché. I felt I had done all I could for the present to ensure the safety of the *Marienbad* and returned to the Annexe. Admiral du Fournet in his book\* is wrong in saying that Rear-Admiral Biard took possession of the thirteen interned ships that night, as will be evident presently.

At midnight, one of the men who were watching Hoffmann's house in Massalia Street reported at the Annexe that the two cars with our agents had been surrounded by a platoon of soldiers with fixed bayonets. I changed out of mufti into uniform and drove round in the Sunbeam to investigate. I told the Greek Lieutenant in charge that if owing to his action anybody had escaped from Hoffmann's house he would be held personally responsible. We argued for some time; but finally, after my giving him an assurance that I did not intend to break into Hoffmann's house or use any kind of violence, he withdrew his men, and our watch was resumed.

I returned to the Annexe where I stayed till six in the morning in order to deal with any further cases of interference which might occur; but nothing happened, and I went home to get an hour or two's sleep. I had hardly been asleep ten minutes when Lafontaine arrived at my house, pale and agitated, to say that at about 6.45 a.m. my men had arrested a man coming out of Hoffmann's house with a leather bag and had brought him to the Annexe. I replied that in doing this they were following out my orders.

"Yes," said Lafontaine, "but you didn't tell them to arrest the Roumanian Military Attaché!"

"My god," I gasped, "you don't mean to say they've done that?"

I dressed as quickly as I could and about nine o'clock notified

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral*, p. 104.



Sir Francis Elliot of what had happened. Colonel Crainiceanu was well known as a fervid pro-German, but his behaviour in visiting as we supposed a notorious agent like Hoffmann at such a time, within a fortnight of his country's having declared war on the Central Powers, seemed a little too fervid. I explained to Sir Francis Elliot that, had I supposed for one moment the Roumanian Military Attaché would appear on the scene at such an hour in the morning, I should have prevented his arrest; but I said that now the damage was done I thought we should have to take a firm line with the Roumanian Minister and obtain from him some kind of assurance that Colonel Crainiceanu, who had already been recalled, would not indulge in any more of this kind of behaviour before going away from Athens. M. Philidor, the Roumanian Minister, was a pasty-faced little man with a profound hatred for the Entente and a strong objection to finding himself compelled to behave as an ally. After some acrimonious discussion he was at last persuaded to give his word of honour that Colonel Crainiceanu should be kept under lock and key at the Roumanian Legation until he departed for Bucharest at the end of a few days. On receiving this assurance Sir Francis agreed to let him leave the Annexe, and to return his bag.

Colonel Crainiceanu was a dark undersized little man, in appearance the typical villain of a provincial melodrama. He was the son of a distinguished Roumanian general who had always been a warm friend of the Entente. His wife, who was not in Athens, had already involved herself with German activities in Switzerland and elsewhere.

No sooner had Colonel Crainiceanu been locked up in the Roumanian Legation than the Radio News Agency, a French corporation, broadcast the news of his arrest all over Europe. This was held by M. Philidor to be a breach of the agreement, and he at once released his Military Attaché. Sir Francis Elliot

told him that much as he deplored the action of the French in publishing the news, he could not on that account release him from his word of honour, and he insisted that the Military Attaché should be locked up again. The answer to this was a letter from Colonel Crainiceanu himself challenging Sir Francis Elliot to a duel. This impudent communication was ignored, and two or three days afterwards the Roumanian Military Attaché left for Bucharest, where I believe steps were taken to keep him out of harm's way.

When I got back to the Annexe after the discussion about Colonel Crainiceanu I found that Otto Ladiges, the Captain of the *Malta*, one of the interned ships, had come out of Hoffmann's house and had been immediately arrested by my men and brought to the Annexe.

The next excitement was at half-past twelve, when one of the agents who had been watching the Austrian Legation brought news that Baron von Freudenthal, the First Secretary, with one of the porters of the Legation, had just driven off at full speed in a car with our second car close behind in pursuit. At two o'clock Freudenthal was brought back to the Annexe with the porter, who had been shot through the leg by one of our men. Our car had reached the beach at Scaramanga almost simultaneously with the Austrian car, for the occupants of which a motor-boat was waiting. My men forbade Freudenthal and the porter to embark. When they paid no attention they were warned they would be stopped by shooting if necessary. As they still insisted on getting into the boat the porter was shot in the leg, whereupon they surrendered.

A paper was found on von Freudenthal with signed instructions from Barcza, another of the Secretaries, to blow up the *Marienbad* immediately. As a matter of fact, the French boarding-party had arrived an hour earlier to take over the ship; but the procrastination of Admiral Dartige du Fournet, in spite

of the warning he had received the night before, would have lost him the most valuable ship of the thirteen that were seized except for the lucky chance that the captain of the *Mariénbad* was a native of Trieste with Allied sympathies. I interviewed him later on in the day. He was a genial fellow and had a son fighting with the Italians at Gorizia. When the German Minister and Falkenhausen had gone on board last night as reported by Zammit, orders had been given to blow up the ship immediately. The captain, however, who had left the *Mariénbad* before the German Minister arrived, had given strict orders to his crew that they were not to blow up the ship without receiving written instructions to do so from the Austrian Legation. Owing to our hot pursuit of the German car and the close invigilation of the German and Austrian Legations there had been no opportunity to communicate with the *Mariénbad* again that night. Thus we saved for the French a ship worth at that date not less than half a million pounds. The captain of the *Mariénbad* also told me where various missing pieces of machinery had been hidden, without which the vessel could not have been made seaworthy for at least three months. This information was communicated to the French Admiral but not acknowledged, and in his book \* with his usual fatuous complacency he claims the credit for finding them. The inaccuracy of Admiral du Fournet over all facts I can check directly leads me to suspect the historical value of the greater part of his book.

There was a ludicrous sequel to this violation of diplomatic immunity when Robertson drove back along Hippocrates Street that evening with the Sunbeam and found his way barred by the women of the quarter who started to scream curses at him. It appeared that the injured porter was a resident of Hippocrates Street, and that his female neighbours were supposing that it

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral*, p. 104.

had been Robertson who had shot the poor man. However, with his usual imperturbability Robertson quietened the furies down, and later on the wounded porter himself testified to his innocence in the matter.

The arrest of Baron von Freudenthal had put us in the position of embarrassing for the first time the French Minister, who by his speech and by his actions had so often embarrassed the British Legation. He came round in much agitation to Sir Francis Elliot to say that he had just pledged his word to the Greek Government that not a single member of the enemy Legations should be touched, and that no sooner had this promise been given than he had received the news of Freudenthal's arrest. However, when he heard the facts he calmed down.

A week or two later a protest against the treatment of a member of his Legation in a neutral capital was signed by the Emperor Francis Joseph and circulated in the Press of all neutral countries. The last echo of the case was heard about a year later when the Germans expelled a number of British subjects from some Swedish Islands in the Baltic. When the Foreign Office protested against such a violation of neutrality, the German Government replied that their action had been taken in reprisal for the outrage against the Austrian Legation in Athens in 1916.

#### TALES OF HOFFMANN AND OTHERS

On the night of September 2nd, between twelve and one o'clock, one of our men reported at the Annexe that half a platoon of soldiers had ordered away our cars and men from Hoffmann's house. I put on uniform and set out to protest against this fresh interference. As I walked up Massalia Street, which rises rapidly to the lower slopes of the hill Lycabettus, the soldiers came marching down the hill toward me, and the young sub-lieutenant in command ordered me to halt. I paid

no attention, but walked quickly on toward him and his men, whereupon he ordered them to load and level their rifles. Bonaparte, who was with me, gripped my arm and urged me to stop. On my other side was Poseidon. I shook off Bonaparte's arm and walked on up the street because I thought it would create an impression of weakness if we were to pay any attention to the levelled rifles. Besides, I was in a rage to think that Hoffmann might have escaped when our men were driven away from their watch and ward. Luckily Poseidon kept cool, and as we walked on up the slope together I told him to shout to the young officer in charge and advise him not to make an ass of himself by firing at me, as by doing so when I was in uniform he would be committing an act of war.

While Poseidon was shouting out in Greek what sounded like and probably were the most ferocious threats, we came right up to the soldiers. I tapped the young officer on the chest to emphasize my remarks which Poseidon was rapidly translating, and in backing away from me he was driven right up against his men's loaded rifles. This was just what I intended, for I knew now that the argument could be carried on without much risk, because the soldiers could not fire at us without hitting their commanding officer as well. I asked him if he was prepared to take the responsibility of having allowed Hoffmann's house to remain unguarded for three-quarters of an hour. He replied that in dispersing my men he had only obeyed orders. I asked whose orders, and he said that they were the orders of the Commandant de la Place. I then told him that he had better go off and ask the Commandant de la Place if he was prepared to accept the responsibility for Hoffmann's escape during this unfortunate interlude.

The sub-lieutenant, a debonair young man with charming manners, promised to do this, and I suggested that the sooner he took his men away and asked for further instructions the

better. He was just giving an order to ground arms when Poseidon, apparently under the impression that he was intending some offensive step against my sacred person, spat in his eye and called him a most unpleasant name in Greek. I kicked Poseidon's bottom as hard as I could, told him to shut up, and made him apologize to the sub-lieutenant. A moment after I looked round to see Bonaparte strutting up the hill like a turkey-cock. He had evidently sniffed surrender. I waved him back and the young officer marched his men off.

Later on I sent round to the Commandant de la Place to inquire the reason for his having attempted to connive at the escape of Hoffmann. He, as usual, denied that he had given any orders to interfere with our men; but I preferred to believe the junior officer.

The next morning I went round to see Sir Francis Elliot about this incident which, following upon the interference of the previous night, showed clearly that there was a desire in high quarters for Hoffmann to escape. I pointed out that neither the men nor the cars I had stationed outside Schenck's house had been interfered with on either night. I pointed out that next door to Hoffmann's house was a club frequented by all the Germanophile members of the Greek General Staff and that, apart from their presumed intercourse with Hoffmann which had been continually reported to me of late, various well-connected people in Athens had acted as Hoffmann's agents. I urged that such a deliberate attempt to thwart our determination to capture the only man we had exempted from safeguard justified us in taking strong measures. Finally, I suggested that Sir Francis Elliot should tell Mr. Zaïmis unofficially that on the following night I would break into Hoffmann's house and establish whether he were still there or not. Sir Francis agreed to do this, and I asked him at the same time to let Mr. Zaïmis know unofficially that if we failed to find our quarry at 3

Massalia Street, we should visit as many other houses connected with Hoffmann's activities as we knew of.

Later on that morning Sir Francis Elliot told me that he had seen Mr. Zaïmis and warned him privately that if any minor disturbance took place during the night it would mean nothing more serious than a search for Hoffmann. He also told Mr. Zaïmis that if other houses besides 3 Massalia Street were visited the fault would lie with the Commandant de la Place for having by his interference given Hoffmann an opportunity to escape from the house to which we had definitely tracked him on the night of September 1st, when the invigilation had begun.

I found on going into the question of Hoffmann's capture that during the last six months no less than fifteen houses in Athens and nine at the Piræus had been connected with his activities. We had at our disposal sixty men and these included everybody from the most junior porter to the chiefs of sections. Ricaud was not due back in Athens until the following day, but Jehan Heurtel offered to provide extra men and extra cars. After consideration I decided to accept the offer, only stipulating that the men under my direct orders should wear red brassards and the men under his orders blue brassards. I stipulated further that the whole enterprise was to be called off at my discretion. To our men when issuing the red brassards I gave orders that they were to return them to Tucker at the Annexe immediately the night's work was accomplished, and I issued a warning that anybody who failed to return his brassard would be instantly dismissed. Actually only two of these brassards were lost, and that was in Methonis Street where six of our men were watching two houses, either of which might have been harbouring Hoffmann. They were attacked by a band of about fifty Reservists fully armed. Four of the agents ran away, but the other two, armed only with knives, prepared to fight fifty armed with rifles. One of them was knocked out with the butt of a rifle,

and the other was shot three times in the groin. While lying unconscious and wounded the two brassards they were wearing were taken from them, and a message was sent to me from one of the chiefs of the Reservists to say that they intended to copy these brassards and use them for revenge. Mock brassards being worn by impostors may account for the gruesome tales circulated about the 'Anglo-French Secret Police'; but more probably the mythopœic faculty always highly developed in Greece was alone responsible for the allegations of highway robberies and murderous outrages committed by wearers of red brassards. Mr. J. C. Lawson gave currency \* to the legend of the red brassard's being used as a licence to break the law. He allowed himself to indulge in hearsay and in doing so offered other writers an opportunity, for taking full advantage of which they can hardly be blamed.

The man who was shot in Methonis Street very nearly died, and believing himself *in extremis* he sent a message to ask me to visit him in hospital because he had something most important to tell me. I found the poor fellow unable to speak above a whisper. I thanked him for the plucky fight he had put up against such odds and said I wished it had been in regular warfare so that I could have recommended him for a medal. He beckoned the interpreter closer to the bed and whispered his request:

"Captain, when you next send me to guard a street, do not put me with men from the mainland, for they are all cowards and run away. With four men from the Islands my friend and I would have fought twice as many dirty Bœotian Reservists, and beaten them."

I am glad to say that in the end the wounded Cretan recovered.

One explanation offered at the time of this savage attack by Reservists on the men watching Methonis Street was that Madame Coutouvali's house was there. Madame Coutouvali

\* *Tales of Ægean Intrigue*, p. 233.



was an attractive and intelligent young woman, half French and half Greek, a native of one of the Ionian Islands, who for the last year had been acting as Baron Schenck's private secretary. The French were particularly bitter against her, and her name had been almost the first written down on the list for expulsion.

On the afternoon of September 3rd, I received a letter from Count Bosdari, the Italian Minister:

*You might be aware (a good deal of gossip has been circulated about this) that among the staff of Baron Schenck's bureau there is a Madame Coutouvali for whom I have a special interest. She managed this morning to let me know that she is practically prisoner in the bureau of Charilaos Tricoupis Street. She implores your mercy to be allowed to go home to look after her child, and then to Christomani's clinic, as her failing health makes it imperative for her to undergo a long treatment. Of course, she is quite ready to accept any surveillance you might think expedient to impose upon her ; and (between us) I think she will readily answer any question you may ask.*

*I know well her story. She was attracted to her dirty work not by any sympathy for Germans, but simply by extreme poverty and by the wish to support her family.*

*I know you are a man of imagination, and trust you will do what you can.*

*Please let me know if there is anything you can do for that poor wretched creature.*

This letter was presently followed up by a visit from Count Bosdari himself. I promised that I would do my best to persuade the French not to send in the name of Madame Coutouvali and I agreed to give her an interview on the following day. In view of my promise I did not believe that the trouble in Methonis Street was caused by any attempt to rescue her that night.

To return to the search for Hoffmann. I found at our disposal nine cars, and at 1 a.m. on the night of September 3rd, I gave the order to surround Massalia Street. We knocked loudly on the door of Number Three but there was no reply. The noise of the cars and the sound of the knocking woke people up and brought inquisitive heads to windows all up the street. Being afraid that some reckless fellow might fire from a house and so provoke a general row, I told our men to go along the street and order the shutters to be closed on both sides. The sight of half a dozen pistols being shaken suggestively soon drove every head inside, and in a street now black and silent we continued to batter on the door of Hoffmann's house. After twenty minutes I gave the order to break in, and a pretty tough door it was. We broke through at last, to find Hoffmann's three 'mindes' waiting outside the door of his apartment on the second floor; but when they saw the odds against them they threw down their pistols and surrendered.

On entering Hoffmann's apartment I soon saw that he had not left any papers behind him and I gave orders that the search was to stop. Presently a gentleman who lived next door came up to say that Mrs. Hoffmann and her sister, who had been in the apartment when we started knocking, had left by the terrace at the back and had taken refuge in his house, and that he would accompany them if I wished to the Annexe of the British Legation. Mrs. Hoffmann was in a very nervous state as might be expected. I sent all the men out of the house and left a car to bring her round to the Annexe, where with her sister and two gentlemen from next door she arrived about three o'clock.

I asked Mrs. Hoffmann where her husband was and she told me that he had left the house on Friday, September 1st, when my men were rounded up the first time by the soldiers.

"And do you know where he is now?"

She assured me that she did not.

"Well, Mrs. Hoffmann," I told her earnestly, "if you have any influence with your husband and if you have any means of communication with him, I urge you for his sake and your own to beg him to surrender to me. I give you until seven o'clock on Wednesday evening to make up your mind. After that I will not accept any responsibility even for his life. You know what the French are when they set out to do a job thoroughly. After seven o'clock on Wednesday evening his future will be in the hands of the French. He cannot possibly escape from Athens, because every road is guarded. On the other hand if he will surrender to me personally I give you my word of honour that he shall not be handed over to the French, that he shall not be tried or interrogated, and that you and he shall be comfortably interned together in Malta for the rest of the War. His status as a German officer (I believe he is a Captain in the Artillery) shall be recognized. So let me once more urge you if you wish to help your husband in the best way you can to do everything to get into touch with him as soon as possible and persuade him to accept my offer."

After making this offer I sent Mrs. Hoffmann and her sister home in the Sunbeam, and told her that she need not be in the least apprehensive of being disturbed again.

When Mrs. Hoffmann was gone I gave orders to visit various houses in which Hoffmann might be hiding, for of course, it would have showed an excess of faith in my own eloquence to assume that she would induce her husband to surrender himself.

Meanwhile, word had been brought me that Reservists all armed had been massing themselves in Omonia Square under the impression that the King was going to be kidnapped by the 'Anglo-French secret police.' They were much excited, and already there had been a good deal of firing into the air to

work up still greater excitement. I thought that if they really had got it into their heads that the King was going to be kidnapped they might try reprisals on the Allied Legations. So before visiting any more houses in search of Hoffmann I gave orders for all the nine cars to drive directly to Omonia Square. There was a crowd of about three hundred armed Reservists there. I gave an order to drive round and round the Square half a dozen times. The effect of this manœuvre was to bewilder and dazzle the Reservists as I hoped it would, for not one of them attempted any hostile act or gesture. After that we drove to another square crowded with armed Reservists and repeated the circling movement. Probably these manœuvres were responsible for the reports in some of the newspapers the following day that a hundred motor-cars with six hundred armed police had charged through a harmless crowd of people and killed a large number of them.

The demonstration to the Reservists accomplished, we drove to a house in Colocynthos Street in order to interrogate a German engineer called Kamphausen, who had many contacts with Hoffmann. Finding Kamphausen gone, we drove on to Didymos Street where another German, Anton von Goedrich, resided in a basement apartment. His sister informed us that her brother had left the house, and we drove on again.

Next morning a Colonel of the Greek General Staff took a solemn oath that his house had been surrounded by motor-cars all night, and that hundreds of shots had been fired in the quarter. The actual facts were that the Colonel had earlier in the evening disguised himself, presumably having a guilty conscience over Hoffmann, and had climbed up on the roof of his house where he had spent the whole night hiding behind some chimney pots. The nine motor-cars which had waited at the corner of Didymos Street for twenty minutes were as much as he saw or heard the whole night.

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The next person we visited was Giannaros, the owner and editor of the newspaper *Hesperini*, the most unscrupulous and perhaps the ablest scribbler against Venizelos. Besides the activity of his propaganda we knew that he had helped Hoffmann to engage many of his best agents, and though I did not suppose for a moment we should find Hoffmann in his house I was inclined to give Mr. Giannaros a bit of a fright. When we knocked at the door of his house it was opened by a couple of porters who aimed their revolvers at me. I invited them to shoot, observing that I should be sorry for what happened to them if they accepted the invitation. I had no intention of breaking into the house by violence, and I argued patiently with the two porters until after ten minutes' parley they opened the inner door. I entered the house with Tucker and an agent. Mr. Giannaros, who on hearing the first knock had escaped to the roof through a small skylight, was persuaded to come down again. He was an excessively fat man, and in trying to get back he stuck halfway in the skylight for over five minutes before we managed to pull him down into his own house again.

He was grateful for being rescued from the skylight and most anxious that I should have a drink. I asked him if Hoffmann was in his house, and he assured me that he had not been there since eleven o'clock on Friday evening.

The most fantastic stories were circulated about the visit to Mr. Giannaros, and finally Mr. Giannaros published in his own paper a denial that he had been badly treated.

"They behaved well on entering and continued to do so during the whole of their visit. They neither maltreated us, nor did they utter one disagreeable word, and what some scurrilous papers have published about their proceedings are false."

From the house of Mr. Giannaros we proceeded to a house in Scouphos Street where another German called Kauffmann

lived, with whom Hoffmann also had many contacts. One of the French officers suddenly remembered that they had had a report that in Kauffmann's garage a quantity of illicitly obtained benzine was stored, and while I was trying to persuade Mrs. Kauffmann to open the front door they broke into the garage. I made a fuss about this, because it was exactly the kind of incident I was anxious to avoid. However, the French were so jubilant at having discovered twenty-five cases of benzine that my remonstrances were not effective.

Another tiresome incident occurred when Mrs. Kauffmann did open the door, for she immediately spat in Bonaparte's eye, and while I was engaged in calming her and trying to get it into her head that all we wanted was to know where Hoffmann was, the French discovered a German flag and a portrait of the Kaiser, which of course they could not resist taking. They then seized a lot of ledgers and business papers, which they carried off with the flag and the portrait.

Realizing by now that it would be impossible to visit any more houses without running the risk of a certain amount of destruction, I declared that it was useless to look any further for Hoffmann and gave orders to drive back to the Annexe where I intended to dismiss everybody. When we reached the Annexe I found a car belonging to the German Legation waiting outside the door. This was offered to me by one of our own employees, who had driven it from the German Legation, as what he evidently thought would be a most welcome present. I asked him what the blazes he meant by driving cars away from the German Legation without orders from me, and he excused himself by saying that one of the French officers had told him to get the car and drive it up to the French School, but that thinking I should have the car if anybody was to have it he had brought it to the Annexe. I told him to drive it back at once to the garage where he had found it.

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I had dismissed all except one of the cars when an agent came in to say that Hoffmann was in the house of a Turk on the outskirts of Phaleron. It was now five o'clock in the morning, and I was tired, having had only five hours of sleep in the last seventy-two hours. However, I drove down to Phaleron on the chance that the information might be exact. It was not. There was nothing for it now but to hope that the solemn warning I had given Mrs. Hoffmann would be effectual.

To show how easily events may be exaggerated by an unscrupulous Press I append some extracts from the reports of what took place on the night of September 3rd. These extracts of the Press made by our own translators at the Annexe are not models of English; but they are literal and throughout this volume I have on principle avoided any attempt to improve them:

### FULL PARTICULARS OF THE BLOODY BATTLE IN THE STREETS OF ATHENS

#### RESERVISTS AGAINST THE ANGLO-FRENCH POLICE AGENTS

##### WORSE SCENES AVOIDED

At 2 a.m. yesterday 35 out of the 50 un-numbered motor cars belonging to the Anglo-French Police Service, carrying about three hundred Police agents, passed through the Omonia Square, some via Rue Piræus, others coming down Stadium Street. Their lights illuminated the Square until turning down Rue III Septembre they reached Anexartissia Square in the Vathy district. Here about 100 reservists were on guard. On hearing that the police were out to capture Mr. Exadactilos, a Staff Officer, they rushed down the Square cheering the King. When the Police saw that they could not cross the Square without a fight, they turned up Rue Halkokondilis and again drove through Omonia Square, about half an hour later. They had killed one of the reservists, named G. Kanellos, who after having parted from his comrades, was making his way home.

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Soon after, he was heard shouting for help, his friends hurried up to him and found him lying on the ground seriously wounded. He then told them that 15 of the Police Agents had attacked him with knives, covering him with wounds.

### EXCITING THE RESERVISTS

This attempt at assassination roused the reservists to the highest pitch of excitement. They imagined that their safety was threatened and started abusing the Anglo-French agents. The bugles were sounded and 200 reservists were soon gathered in the Square. What roused their resentment most was the cry that some agents in the cars were shouting "Down with the King."

Armed and shouting they crossed the Omonia Square to the Headquarters of the League, at the corner of Rue Eolos and Sofokles thence to their centre in the district of Neapolis, as they had been told that an attack would be made on them there in the early hours of the morning. Colour was given to this report by the fact a great many motors had been seen passing up and down, and that the streets more especially those of Methonis and Kallidromiou were well patrolled by the Anglo-French Police Agents.

### FIGHT BETWEEN POLICE AND RESERVISTS

#### 100 SHOTS FIRED

When the reservists reached their Neapolis Headquarters they found all their comrades ready armed and waiting. After a short consultation they decided to send a small reconnoitring force to patrol the streets in the neighbourhood, more especially those mentioned above. The patrol had hardly started when shots were heard from the Rue Methonis. What had happened? When the Police agents numbering about 30 saw the reservist patrol coming down the street, they hid round the corner and fired on them, fortunately unsuccessfully. The reservists returned the fire, others hurried up, and a miniature battle took place. About 100 shots were fired. The reservists managed to



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capture one of the agents, took his revolver, and tore off his badge; but his re-capture was quickly effected by his comrades. The reservists who numbered 50 only judged it wiser to retreat. The police were at last beaten off by the reservists, carrying with them two of their number badly wounded.

### AFTER THE FIGHT

After the fight, which had been followed at a distance by the Police Officer of the 5th District and his men, was over, the reservists went back to their centre cheering the King. Here a stirring speech was made, while the buglers called up all the reservists to a general gathering.

### ARRIVAL OF THE GARRISON COMMANDER

Half an hour after the above fight took place at 4.30 a.m. and just as the reservists were ready to march through the town and clear all the foreign police out, a Lieutenant of the Garrison Command, Mr. Zorbas, rode up and tried in vain to calm them. At this moment a motor-car with one of the lamps out came up the street. The reservists seized their guns and made ready to attack it, thinking it belonged to the Anglo-French Police.

As soon as the car came closer up the reservists shouted to the chauffeur to stop. The moment was critical, it looked as though there would be another fight. The car came to a stop 50 yards off, and the Garrison Commander greatly affected called the leaders of the reservists to him and begged them to remain quiet. It was early morning, the day having already broken, when mounted troops came up, as well as a strong body of infantry and gendarmes, and surrounded the reservists. In spite of this, the latter were quite ready to attack the soldiers, had any attempt been made on their liberty.

The Garrison Commander managed at last to calm the reservists and persuaded them not to come into the town armed and in large bodies. It had been said that they ultimately decided to meet at Gooudi and compose a petition to the Government, protesting against the arrest of any Greek subject by the Foreign Police. During Mr. Polimenakos' speech the police of the 5th

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District had made a careful search of the neighbourhood, and discovered the Anglo-French agents near Tsakayanni, waiting for their cars to come and drive them home. Two of the agents were seriously wounded by revolver shots, Alexoglou in the head and Stravarides in the foot. Both are refugees. Shortly after 3 motors came up and they drove off.

### RESERVISTS CAPTURE POLICE AGENTS

During the early morning hours yesterday the 'Vathy' reservists patrolling the Square of Koumoundouros captured two of the 6 agents hidden there. They are Papadakis and Georgacopoulos, both of Rethimo-Crete. Two revolvers and two red badges worn round the left arm were found on them. They were taken to the 6th Police Station, but released almost immediately.

From the *Nea Hemera* : September 5th, 1916.

### A NIGHT OF TUMULT IN THE CAPITAL

THE ANGLO-FRENCH BLOCKADE DIFFERENT QUARTERS OF  
THE TOWN  
STRUGGLES BETWEEN THE RESERVISTS AND THE ENTENTE  
POLICE

The town of Athens has rarely seen such nights as the night before last. It is difficult to form an idea of the panic and fear which reigned through the whole of the night, the events of which were witnessed by the inhabitants of the different quarters where they took place.

Motor-cars crowded with French and English officers and sailors, detectives and police spies, sped through the town, from midnight onward, spreading panic everywhere. These cars passed in preference before the different headquarters of the Reservist Association, whose members made use of all methods in their power to avoid tumults, and if we have to deplore certain events, all those of real gravity were avoided, thanks to Greek presence of mind.

The first incident is reported from the Balyas quarter. A

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reservist of the name of Canellos returning to his home from the Reservist Headquarters of his section was attacked by five individuals, who wounded him with a knife and fled. The wounded man's companions, attracted by his cries, ran to the spot and carried him away. He had on his face the knife wound. All this took place at one o'clock in the morning of Monday.

The day before a number of reservists received anonymous letters couched in friendly tones advising them for their own welfare to retire from the Reservists' Associations before anything regrettable happened to them. These letters were the presage of the approaching attack, of which the incident of Canellos was the preface.

### THE EVENTS IN KERAMIKOS KOLOCINTHOS STREET

Towards 2 o'clock in the morning the Section 'Vathya' of the Reservists' Association received notice that a reservist was to be arrested at the crossing of Keramikos and Kolocinthos Streets. Thirty reservists went at once to the place indicated and surrounded it. Five members of the secret French and English police found there took to their heels. The reservists pursued them and arrested two, who were taken under escort to their Headquarters, where they were put to an interrogatory. They stated their names were Michel Papadakis and Constantin Gheorghoulakis, that they were from Rethymno, and that they had taken service with the foreign police, for which they received a salary, because they had been told that the Bulgarians had invaded Macedonia and that the fatherland was in danger.

They were found in possession of tickets to America, passports, certificates bearing their photographs, and a considerable sum of money. They were then delivered, securely tied, to the Police, to be handed over to their masters, after they had been told they were the first to be arrested, but the last to be released alive.

Towards 3 o'clock in the morning, 11 motor-cars filled with officers, sailors, and Anglo-French policemen, were seen to pass before the offices of the Reservist Association of the Vathya quarter in a manner to attract attention. At this sight the

reservists swore to meet them with the cry, "Long live the Greek King." But at the same moment it having been said that the cars were proceeding to the house of Staff Colonel Exadactilos, the reservists followed them at once. The drivers of the cars changed direction frequently, but finally stopped before the house of the German Kentrich, who was to be arrested.

Mr. Kentrich was absent, but his wife and brother were in the house. The brother, having been called upon to open the door and not being willing to do so, found himself a few seconds later face to face with a number of persons wearing beards who presented their revolvers at him.

Mrs. Kentrich began to scream and struggle with one of the intruders, and took away his hat, which a reservist, her neighbour, secured next day as a trophy.

And here is the other side of the story from one of the Liberal newspapers:

From the *Ethniki* : September 5th, 1916.

THE HYDRA OF LERNA MUST BE  
KNOCKED ON THE HEAD

Mr. Zymbrakaki and you Commander of the Garrison, all you others in authority: It is your imperative duty to knock on the head this hydra which has raised thousands of heads, ready to suck the blood of the Greeks.

The hydra in question—let us speak plainly and openly—is the Reservists' Union, these men who have ordained themselves Hercules of the Crown, and defenders of our honour, who secretly cherish the ambition of shedding blood in Athens. They were chief actors in deplorable scenes during the night before last. Seeing some motor-cars of the British Police driving in the direction of 3-Septembre Street, they shouted, "Fifty cars driving to Tatōi! They will make a prisoner of our King! Come, hurry to our (headquarters) barracks, take arms and save the King!"

This naturally created a commotion, and Omonia Square was for some time in a panic, which was only dispelled when

the people made sure that the reservists' cries were lies of the blackest dye.

Even if certain people intend bringing about encounters in Athens, it is surely the duty of the rest to prevent them. Fortunately, the arrest of the tools of the German propaganda will henceforth be effected by the Greek Police and there will therefore be no excuse for the exercise of such patriotic ardour. The hot-blooded patriots who ostentatiously install themselves in the Cafés in Omonia Square, holding their thick sticks and frowning fiercely at the passers-by, would do well to take a reef in their sails. We have besides, the Government's declaration that,

"No demonstrations of the self-styled 'Defenders of public order' will be tolerated. Any such will be liable to instant arrests by the Greek authorities."

And we expect this declaration to be enforced to its full extent.

Paxton Hibben on this occasion excelled himself by sending the following telegram to the Associated Press:

*Monday unauthorized arrests Greek as well as Austro-Germans by Anglo-French secret police aroused deepest indignation Athens even endangering complete accord shortly destined change entire aspect military situation Balkans. Novelist Compton Mackenzie head British secret police dressed like chorus man cerise silk handkerchief peeping from sleeve directs from security British Legation operations some fifty automobiles filled hired gunmen armed to teeth engaged effecting arrests. Local apaches seizing opportunity offered by miscellaneous arrests made without other authority than force formed bands terrorizing populations Athens, Piræus, pretending to be British agents to rob levy blackmail innocent citizens throwing cities (into) greatest confusion.*

*Meanwhile Greek police efficiently engaged arresting all those whose names furnished by Entente. Extraordinary scenes at theatres, movies, in streets when groups Greek police armed rifles pass guarding Austro-Germans to be deported.*

## SEPTEMBER

The whole of this dispatch, except the final two sentences, was held up by the Censor at Malta. Sir Basil Thomson \* works himself into a state of emotional indignation over Hibben's treatment, and suggests that Mr. Venizelos was so afraid of his book *Constantine I and the Greek People*, published in America, as to buy up all the copies of it he could find. I showed the drunken little correspondent this censored dispatch myself and warned him time after time that if he persisted in telegraphing such lies the Censorship would mutilate his messages. Yet Sir Basil Thomson states that Hibben did not know his dispatches had been stopped until he found them in the Censor's office at Malta.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of Monday, September 4th, Mrs. Hoffmann and her brother, a Lieutenant Gravaris, came to the Annexe to inform me that Hoffmann had agreed to surrender himself to me personally. Gravaris said that he would call for me at seven o'clock that evening in a closed landau and drive me to the place where his brother-in-law intended to surrender himself. The only stipulation Hoffmann made was that I should be absolutely alone, which I accepted.

By this time Ricaud had returned to Athens, and I had a long argument with him before I could persuade him to remove Madame Coutouvali's name from the list of those whose expulsion from Greece was to be demanded. Finally, he gave a most grudging assent to my request. I telephoned at once to Count Bosdari to say I had been able to do what he wanted, and shortly afterwards he brought Madame Coutouvali to the Annexe, where, after telling me that she was anxious to thank me herself, he left her.

I can remember little of the conversation we had beyond her saying that she hoped that the times would soon change, so that she might one day have the pleasure of meeting me as the

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 114.

*littérateur* and not as the *policier*. She asked if I should like an interview with Baron Schenck before he left Athens, and promised to try to arrange one that afternoon at her own house in Methonis Street. An hour or two later she rang me up to say that if I would call there at four o'clock Baron Schenck would be glad to meet me. The last thing I had expected in the course of my work was a personal meeting with the Baron, and I felt pleasantly excited when I left the car two or three streets away and walked along through the afternoon sunshine to 63 Methonis Street.

Madame Coutouvali herself opened the door and showed me into a small room on the right, which seems in memory filled with palms and ferns. The Baron came forward at once, and we shook hands. He was typically Teuton, with a big nose, fleshy neck, and that pork-like texture of skin which is so frequent among Germans. The conversation was carried on in French, and we began by complimenting one another on the fairness of our play so far as fair play was possible in such work as ours. Both of us had had opportunities of making attacks on the private behaviour of our opponents, but neither Schenck nor myself had availed ourselves of such opportunities. The Baron was a little inclined to be lachrymose over what he called the persecution of last night, of which no doubt he had received exaggerated reports. I told him that I had been determined to prevent Hoffmann's escape because I regarded Hoffmann as the most acute and most successful director of espionage in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Baron expressed great surprise at this testimonial and assured me that he had always considered Hoffmann of no importance whatever. I then asked the Baron if I had been correct when I wrote my report of his activities in asserting that he had probably not dispatched many spies or supplied a single case of benzine to submarines during the whole of his stay in Greece. He replied emphatically that I was.

Then we discussed the question of money, and he agreed with me that the oriental atmosphere of Greece evoked Arabian Nights' tales of treasure.

"I do not suppose for a moment," he said, "that either you or I ever spent more than ten thousand pounds in a single month."

"Ten thousand!" I exclaimed. "Why, for the first six months I found it difficult to get five hundred a month."

The Baron smiled sceptically.

"Upon my word of honour," I insisted, "that is the sum. There is no point in trying to mislead you at this moment, and even now I am not able to handle a third of the sum you just mentioned."

The Baron shrugged his shoulders.

"I am compelled to believe you," he said, "but I cannot comprehend how you have done what you have done on such a trifling allowance."

After this we talked about the members of the German Legation, and I was able to surprise him with my own accurate information about so much of what had gone on inside.

"You must have a very good agent," he said with a shrewd look.

"Very good," I assented; "but alas! a month ago he was dismissed."

"Ah, it was not a member of the Staff, merely a servant," the Baron commented.

I asked the Baron if he agreed with me that Major von Falkenhausen was the ablest member of his Legation, and he replied that the Military Attaché was the only one who knew how *se retenir*. I asked him if he thought Baron de Grancy was an able organizer of espionage.

"Grancy?" Schenck laughed. "*Mon Dieu*, don't tell me he has been sending out agents, for I will not believe you."



I told him about the Lestage organization which we had broken up, and the chief agents of which had been shot a month ago. The Baron shook his head.

"*Incroyable !*" he murmured.

The discussion of Grancy brought us to the question of submarine victualling, and the Baron admitted that small quantities of benzine had occasionally been supplied, but no more than would have been enough to clean the engines.

I told him I was glad I had been able to persuade the French to expunge the name of his secretary, Madame Coutouvali, from the list of proscribed persons notified to the Greek Government that morning. He was sensibly much obliged and expressed his thanks to me several times. This led me to speak of the French Intelligence and of the many efforts they had made to introduce false agents into his service. He criticized academically the French system for a short while, and also the characters and abilities of the various agents who had double-crossed him and myself. He was gratified to hear that nearly every one of them had been successfully deported to Malta for the rest of the War. In the course of criticizing the French Intelligence he let fall that there was a serious leakage of information in the French Legation itself. The conversation came round to the future, and I assured the Baron that no harm was intended to him or any of the people who were to be expelled, and that I had no doubt but that they would all be sent away as pleasantly as possible.

"I have said this, M. le Baron, because I was afraid you might be led by fantastic and terrifying rumours into attempting a secret escape."

"*Vous êtes toujours gentleman, M. le capitaine.* And now, would you be so obliging as to tell me if Dr. Caro, the Head of the German Archæological School, is named for expulsion?"

I told him that Dr. Caro's name was on the list.

"Is it not possible to make an exception in his favour?" he asked. "He is a man whose whole life is centred in Greece, and it will be a terrible blow to him if he has to leave it like this."

I told him that everybody had deeply regretted the necessity for Dr. Caro's expulsion, but that he had been unanimously considered far too clever a man to be allowed to stay.

Then the Baron spoke of peace.

"I hope with all my heart," he said, "that soon a peace will be signed which will not estrange (*froisser*) eternally our two nations. Ah, if I had been Ambassador in London there could never have been a war between us."

His last words were, "If and when it comes to a question of negotiations, do not forget to say that you knew me as a man who can see straight from the point of view of both sides."

We shook hands, and after wishing him a pleasant journey, I left the house at a quarter to five.

Sir Basil Thomson tells the following story \* :

"Next day Admiral Dartige du Fournet received a visit from de Roquefeuil fresh from dabbling in high politics with his friend, Baron von Schenck. The two adventurers had been closeted together for some hours on the preceding night before they were able to come to an agreement that was to leave its mark on history. Alsace and Lorraine were to be given back to France: the German submarine fleet was to be ceded to the British. De Roquefeuil was excited. He demanded from the Admiral a fast destroyer to carry the great news to Paris. The Admiral took a more temperate view of the proposal and flatly declined to expend good French fuel on transmitting the news: for such a proposal he thought the ordinary mail quite rapid enough. One of the wildest of de Roquefeuil's schemes at this period was secretly to abduct the King and Queen."

He gives no authority for this story about a meeting between de Roquefeuil and Schenck. If this alleged interview took place,

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 129.

it must have taken place on the night of Sunday, September 3rd, while Athens was being terrorized by our motor-cars.

But earlier in his book,\* Sir Basil Thomson writes:

“The arch-protagonists, de Roquefeuil and von Schenck, were often closeted together in a villa rented by von Schenck in a deserted summer resort near Athens, ostensibly to exchange confidences about the personnel of their respective secret services, actually to weave fantastic conspiracies, in which each believed himself to be worsting the other, to bring about a separate peace between France and Germany as related by Admiral Dartige du Fournet.”

If this tale be true, why was it necessary for Count Bosdari to interest himself on Madame Coutouvali's behalf? De Roquefeuil was surely the man to approach, unless we are to believe that Baron Schenck's secretary was ignorant of these meetings, which is improbable. Even if she were ignorant of them it is more than improbable that I should never have heard even so much as a rumour of them.

It will have been noted that Schenck hinted to me that there was a serious leakage of information in the French Legation itself, but the babbling indiscretion of M. Guillemin himself was enough to give colour to such an idea. It was a habit of the Royalist entourage and even of King Constantine to claim that they were cognizant of everything that was being said or thought or done or proposed in both the British and the French Legations and in the two Intelligence Services. Yet I was never once able to discover that they possessed any exact information. It was indeed an idle claim, like a schoolgirl who when she wants to be let into a secret vows that she knows it already.

The pages which Sir Basil Thomson devotes to what he calls his *dossier* of de Roquefeuil are for their fantasy worthy of the

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 90.

subsidized pro-German Press in Athens during 1916. He cannot even get Ricaud's name right.

My next business was to receive Hoffmann's surrender. When Tucker and the rest of them saw the closed landau arrive with Mrs. Hoffmann and Lieutenant Gravaris, they all decided as usual that once I was lured into that landau I should never be seen again. Tucker, in spite of the naval uniform which had just arrived from London, was tremulous. Zanardi's grizzled, curly hair was ruffled with agitation. Bonaparte was macabre.

"Skipper," he said, "it's not death. We can all face death. I faced death at La Bassée. But it's torture, Skipper. That's why you mustn't go alone. You may be tortured."

"I think, my Captain," broke in the smooth voice of Poseidon, "it is very temerarious to go alone. Excuse me, Mr. Bonaparte, that I must interrupt you."

"It's bloody stupidity, if you'll excuse me, Captain Z," Tucker declared.

"Mr. Tucker, excuse to me," Poseidon protested, with his manner of a master of ceremonies, "that is not a perfect way to speak to the Captain."

I stopped the discussion by saying that I was going alone because I had given my word to do so, and that if I did not go alone Hoffmann would have every right to refuse to keep his side of the bargain.

At the moment Jeffries of the *Daily Mail* asked whether he might not follow me in a cab, as he should like to send his paper a suitably censored account of the meeting between me and Hoffmann. I told him that, while he could hardly expect an invitation to follow me in another carriage, the liberty of the Press was its own, and he must do what he thought best. Then I went downstairs, and a moment or two later I was in the closed landau being driven slowly toward the rendezvous, which was

St. Philip's Church, at the other end of Athens, in the lowest quarter of the city. I wondered vaguely as we jogged along whether I had allowed myself to fall into an obvious trap, but I never cross any bridge until I reach it, and the time passed in small talk with Mrs. Hoffmann and her brother.

It was nearing dusk when we reached the steps of St. Philip's Church, on the top of which I confess I was not displeased to see the willowy form of Jeffries. I had waited for five minutes on the pavement, jostled by the passers-by and listening to the cries of the street-vendors in this poor quarter, when suddenly a dumpy little man with pince-nez rather like the White King in *Alice* was standing in front of me and clicking his heels.

"Captain Hoffmann," he announced.

"Captain Mackenzie," I replied.

Whereupon he clicked his heels again, bowing, and I held out my hand. There was a good deal more clicking of heels before we could decide which was to get into the landau first. At last we all squeezed in and drove back to the Annexe through the fast-deepening dusk. On our arrival Mrs. Hoffmann burst into tears, but I assured her there was no cause to be anxious, since I had given my word that I would be responsible for her husband's safety. So she mopped her eyes, and the landau drove off as Hoffmann and I walked upstairs to my room.

"Now, Captain Hoffmann," I said, "I hope you will gratify my curiosity as much as you can by answering a few questions, though I want to assure you that anything we talk about is not for information which might be used to jeopardize any of the people with whom you have been in contact."

"If I can answer your questions I will answer them," Hoffmann said. "But if I cannot answer I must beg you to excuse me."

I knew already that some fifteen years ago Hoffmann had been a lieutenant in the German Artillery. In fact, I had, and

still have, a photograph of him as a smart young officer. I knew that there had been some scandal which had led him to leave the Army and come to Greece, where he had started business as a commission-agent and had finally married a Hellene. He now told me that he had been called up for military service in Germany in the month of July 1915, and that almost immediately afterwards he had been told to remain in Greece in order that he might work there for his country. In September 1915 he had received instructions directly from the General Staff in Berlin to dispatch as many agents as possible to Italy and obtain from there all the information he could.

"I assure you it was very difficult for me, Captain Mackenzie, for I had never done any work like that before, and I did not know how in the least to begin. So I went to consult with Baron Schenck, because I knew that up to that time he had been sending a few spies to Italy, but in a very amateurish way."

This information confirmed what I had written in my February report on German activities in Athens.

Schenck had been friendly and had produced an agent for Hoffmann whom he said he could warmly recommend. The man was sent off on his mission, and returned about four weeks later. Soon afterwards Hoffmann discovered that the same report which had been handed to him had also been sent to Colonel Braquet, the French Military Attaché. After that he had never gone near Schenck, who, as I had heard that afternoon, did not consider Hoffmann worth bothering about.

Hoffmann went on to say that he had been given *carte blanche* for his expenditure and that his outgoings had never been questioned. In September 1915 he had spent four thousand francs on espionage. In August 1916 he had spent forty thousand francs. His complete expenditure for espionage alone, since he started work, had been over three hundred and fifty thousand francs. He had sent fifty-three agents to Italy and twenty-two

agents to Salonica. These agents had belonged to all classes, but chiefly to the well-to-do elements of the population, and in many instances to the highest classes. All this exactly bore out my theories about his manner of work, and it accounted for the extraordinary efforts made in Athens to thwart our attempts to capture him. I asked if he had ever showed his information to Falkenhausen or Grancy, at which he laughed and, rubbing his hands, declared that he had never shown them a word.

"And let me tell you, Captain Mackenzie, Falkenhausen has been very annoyed on account of that, and has often written to complain that I never showed him any of my information."

It was amusing to hear that the German Legation, Schenck, and Hoffmann were all working independently of one another, and moreover all as jealous of one another as the various branches of our own Intelligence. I asked Hoffmann how he conveyed his information to Berlin, and he told me that it was always telegraphed in his own cipher, which was kept in a private safe at the Legation.

"But did you never send a courier, or use the Legation courier?" I asked.

"Never."

"Was any of your information sent back by the General Staff to the Legation?"

"Any information that might be useful to the Greek General Staff was sent back for Falkenhausen to give it to them."

I thought it was time to encourage Hoffmann's agreeable conversation by telling him a story or two of my own. So I told him about my capture of the German mail.

"Well, two days after the mail had been captured Grancy told me he had an idea it had been captured, but I didn't believe it. Fancy sending off a courier like that! Tut-tut-tut! Terrible! Why, if that were known in Berlin Grancy would be court-martialled."

I told Hoffmann that we had captured all Grancy's agents so far, and that a new lot which had just started would presently be captured, too.

"I'm not surprised," said Hoffmann.

"Am I right in thinking that Captain Max Griebel was sent from Berlin to do counter-espionage here?" I asked.

"How did you know that?" exclaimed Hoffmann. "But it's true, and he was soon recalled because he was no good."

"And lately Schenck has been entrusted with counter-espionage?" I asked.

"Yes, but that is quite a joke," Hoffmann chuckled.

"I think we discovered one of your recipes for invisible ink, Captain Hoffmann," I said. "Am I right in saying 'two grains of anti-pyrine dissolved in fifty grains of distilled water to be used with rough paper and developed with chloride of iron'?"

"Yes, I have used that ink," he admitted, "but only for my second-class agents. For my first-class agents," he added proudly, "the ink was sent straight from Berlin to me by special courier. Four large bottles. Two positive and two negative. And now I will tell you something which will perhaps make you annoyed. If you had searched a little longer in my room at 3 Messalia Street you would have found two bottles of that ink."

I must have shown my chagrin at hearing this, for Hoffmann leaned back in his chair and his dumpy little body shook with laughter.

"But do not be too sad, Captain Mackenzie," he puffed at last. "You would only have found two bottles of the negative. I had already destroyed the positive."

I asked him if for my personal satisfaction he could not secure me a few drops of this ink which I promised not to use until peace was signed.

"Ah, that is something I think you cannot ask," he said with a smile.



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"Did they send you any chemical formula?"

"Yes, a formula was sent, but I destroyed it for fear of accidents. It began with Menthol? Denthol? Benthol? Ach, I cannot remember."

I told him I had been close on the tracks of several of his agents. He asked for their names. I mentioned half a dozen, and he looked at me sharply; but of course he declined to say whether I was right or not. He was as much surprised as Schenck when I told him that until October 1915 the amount of money devoted to counter-espionage by the British Intelligence Service never amounted to more than two hundred pounds a month, and that it was some time after that before as much as five hundred pounds a month was spent.

"That is most extraordinary," he said, "for all the Germans here have always been grumbling at the amount of money the English could command compared with them."

Then we talked about the French Service, and like Schenck he dropped a hint that somebody in a confidential position at the French Legation was giving the enemy important information. The only persons in his own Legation of whom he spoke with any respect were Falkenhausen and Paul Trompke, the Chancellor.

I asked if I was right in supposing that Falkenhausen never sent any agents, and he said that I was and that the Military Attaché confined himself entirely to information he received from the Greek General Staff.

"And you, Captain Hoffmann, have you had many dealings with the Greek General Staff?"

He shrugged his shoulders and was silent.

"Then you have not a high opinion of the Marine Attaché?"

"No, he is a fool," said Hoffmann.

"And von Dueffel, his Assistant?"

"He is lazy and stupid," said Hoffmann. "But I tell you it

was lucky for you that Major von Schweinitz did not stay in Athens, for he was as clever as all the rest of them put together."

I told him how I had chased von Schweinitz out of Cephissia that night and asked whether he had gone away by submarine; but he would not relieve my curiosity on that point. Then I asked if the relations between Schenck and the Legation were not strained. He told me that every member of the Legation hated Schenck, but that they were all afraid of him. If things did not go exactly as Schenck wanted them to go, he would visit the Legation and threaten to resign next day. So they usually did what he wanted.

At the end of our talk Hoffmann promised that in consideration of the way I had treated him he would, before he left Malta at the end of the War, give me a complete history of his own activities in Athens, and of any other people's activities that he knew about. Circumstances unfortunately prevented my availing myself of this offer.

"And now, Captain Hoffmann," I told him, "I propose to send you back to your own house at the Piræus on parole. You will be accompanied by Sergeant Bonaparte."

I rang for Bonaparte, and after some more ceremonious clicking of heels Captain Hoffmann left the Annexe in his company.

There was something most engaging about that funny fat little man, so proud of being a German artillery officer of the Reserve. In fact that very night he was to show himself conscious of the obligation of honour which his profession laid upon him. At eleven o'clock Bonaparte rang up to announce in a voice shaking with emotion that Hoffmann's house at the Piræus had been entirely surrounded by Reservists who were shouting at him to come out and be rescued. I told Bonaparte to warn Hoffmann that I would hold him strictly to his parole, at which

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Bonaparte sounded somewhat disappointed, for I think he was expecting every minute that, unless Hoffmann agreed to break his parole, the Reservists would enter the house and rescue him by force with possibly fatal results for Bonaparte himself.

I sent down two or three men to the Piræus as quickly as possible, and they found that Bauer, one of the clerks of the Legation, had driven down with a car and an invitation from Count von Mirbach, the Minister, to take refuge in the Legation where he would be perfectly safe. Hoffmann went out on the balcony and refused to accept the offer of rescue. A mob of Reservists fired several shots to encourage him, but the little man held fast to his parole, and finally they dispersed.

Two days later Hoffmann and his wife were driven down from the Piræus to Castella where they were put on board the *Princess Alberta* and sent direct to Malta, preceded by a request from me to Farmer that he would do all he could to see that they were comfortable.

### THE EXPULSION OF BARON SCHENCK

On September 8th, fifty-five Germans, whose deportation from Greece had been accepted by the Greek Government in response to the demands of the Note handed in by Admiral Dartige du Fournet, went on board the *Margarita*, a coasting steamer, which was to take them from the Piræus to Oxilar, where they would be handed over to the care of the Bulgarians. The scene on board was pathetic and dreary. Ricaud and myself sat at a table in the saloon and as one after another every German presented himself we checked his name on the list. The Germans were accompanied by one of the clerks of the Greek Foreign Office who was in a state of acute nervousness, having made up his mind that if he escaped being sunk by an Allied ship on the way he would only escape that to be massacred by

the Bulgarians at the end of the journey unless he had already been put to death by the Germans on board.

I can remember little of the scene except the stern expression on Ricaud's dark face, and the way he gnawed his moustache all the time while he was bending over the lists. After we had checked every name I took a turn with Baron Schenck up and down the deck for ten minutes or so, but what we talked about I have forgotten.

Paxton Hibben's final interview with the Baron is worth comparing with our conversation in Madame Coutouvali's house. We had documentary proof that the Germans had expended on propaganda and espionage at least £400,000. The sum total spent by ourselves in the same period was under £10,000, and in that £10,000 was included all the expenses of the Passport Control, the Port Control, and the Benzine Control. I should estimate that hardly a thousand pounds was spent on actual propaganda in the whole of 1916.

Paxton Hibben made a habit at this date of saying in every one of his cables to America that I had been recalled. For this information he was indebted to the Palace, which had been assured of it from London by Prince Andrew.

Here is the text of the interview:

Thursday.

Baron Adolf Schenck zu Schweinsberg, the chief German propagandist in Greece, sailed this evening for Cavalla whence he will return to Germany through Bulgaria. The dirty little coasting steamer *Margarita* in which the Baron embarked might have been the smartest of yachts if one judged it from the passenger-list of distinguished Austrians and Germans deported at the insistency of the Allies. The cabin was filled with expensive flowers as a last gift to the Baron by his many Greek friends. The whole of the accommodation of the ship was booked for the deported Germans.

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In an interview with the representative of the Associated Press on the bridge of the steamer Baron Schenck said:

"The Allies were the ablest assistants I had in my work. The entry of Greece into the war depends entirely upon whether the Allies continue my work or not."

That insignificant furtive little man who had whipped Greece into line with Germany and held them for two years spoke very modestly of his own work. When asked if he was satisfied with the result, he replied:

"Up to a certain point, thanks to the able services rendered to me by the Allies, the results have far exceeded my greatest expectations. I have been crushed at last by a sheer mass."

"Massed money, Baron, or massed force?" I asked.

"By both," the Baron said. "You would be surprised if you could see my budget. The whole world would be astonished if it could realize how much had been done with such a slight expenditure."

"You spent less than Compton Mackenzie, Baron?" I asked.

"Far less," the Baron declared emphatically. "And I have done far more. Our strength lay in the perfection of German organization. When I came to Greece public sentiment if not actually hostile to Germany was not at all friendly. I had nobody to help me. I began in the smallest way working my way up very slowly, conquering trench after trench of public opinion in the same way as the Germans conquered trench after trench in Belgium and Poland."

"Do you think your work is finished now?" I asked.

"I have no hope of course that my work will live in the hearts of those who have worked with me; but assuredly no organization that has been built up in the way we Germans know how to build up our organizations could be destroyed in a day. No, I hardly think my work will disappear with my own departure from Greece."

"Do you think that Greece will now join the Allies?"

"That entirely depends on the Allies themselves. They can blockade Greece with sixty battleships if they like but they can-

not compel a free people to fight if they do not want to fight. If the Allies continue to make such crass blunders as during the last few days I leave my work cheerfully in their hands."

Later I interviewed the British Military Attaché and learnt from him that Compton Mackenzie, the Chief of the British Secret Police, had been recalled.

During that first week of September Sir Francis Elliot, M. Guillemain, and all the members of both the British and French Legations were very optimistic over the prospect of the Greeks coming into the War on our side. I could not see at the time the faintest excuse for such optimism; but undoubtedly even Mr. Venizelos himself was sufficiently influenced by the atmosphere of hope to postpone his abandonment of Athens and the proclamation of a Provisional Government. Perhaps it was the continuation of Mr. Zaïmis in office which gave a certain amount of colour to these hopes. Yet it was really clear that, even if the King himself sometimes played with the notion of entering the War, his entourage had no intention of surrendering at any point to Mr. Venizelos and the Liberals. The Reservist Leagues, which had been called into being by the political astuteness of Gounaris to win the Elections by threats of violence and by violence itself, carried on their agitation under the unscrupulous direction of the firebrand Mercouris without any check from high quarters. The Greek police under Colonel Zymbrakakis and Captain Maroudas did their best to work in loyal co-operation with the Entente representatives and to carry out the engagements solemnly undertaken by accepting the various Notes presented to the Greek Government; but they were thwarted at every step.

Throughout the first half of September the Reservists were making night hideous with bugles and drums and shouts of "Long Live the King!" and "Down with Venizelos!" The Liberals themselves were continually being assaulted and beaten,

and our own agents were often fired at from cover. Any sign of weakness might easily have ended in a massacre of the Liberals. One night when two of our men were sitting in a café in Omonia Square they were seized by a large band of Reservists and carried off to their headquarters whence a note was sent to me offering to release our men if I would promise not to persecute the Reservists any longer. The amount of persecution that the whole of my staff, which consisted mainly of clerks, could inflict upon ten thousand armed Reservists may be imagined. However, thinking a little real persecution might be a lesson I went out with a couple of agents and bagged five Reservists. Then I sent a note back to the Reservist headquarters to say that when they brought back our two men with apologies they could have their own five again. This was done. A night or two after this while Robertson and I were driving home in the Sunbeam from a visit to Laurium we were shot at from behind a hedge, and the bullet smashed the windscreen. Robertson's face was scratched by the broken glass, but neither of us was hurt. A few days later, just as we reached the end of Hippocrates Street and slowed up to turn into Ghizi Street where I was living, a boulder crashed down from the slopes of Lycabettus and missed the car by a couple of yards. Of course, that may have been an accident; but it was the first time a boulder had behaved like this in that street.

All this time de Roquefeuil and Admiral Dartige du Fournet were squabbling, and now the French Admiral began to interfere with our Port Control of the Piræus. He made a perfect nuisance of himself by imposing all sorts of restrictions, and but for Rogers's tact and ability he would probably have succeeded in wrecking it altogether. In Athens M. Guillemin's conversion to the belief that the King was seriously intending to enter the War had infuriated de Roquefeuil, and it was actually planned at the French School to kidnap poor M. Guillemin and

carry him off to the mountains in order to create an 'incident'. This plan was abandoned, to create another 'incident' equally farcical.

It was the habit of the four chief Allied Ministers to for-gather every afternoon, usually at the French Legation in Cephissia Road, and discuss the events of the day. On September 9th, while they were talking in M. Guillemin's room, the blinds of which were not yet drawn, though the chandelier was alight, a few men rushed into the garden which separated the house from the road, fired half a dozen shots into the air, shouted "Down with France!" "Down with England!" and "Long Live King Constantine!" and scampered off. I hesitate after so many years to vouch for the accuracy of the tale generally believed at the time that the Allied Ministers with the exception of Sir Francis Elliot immediately threw themselves down on the floor and crawled under the table; but so it was related by gossip. I had heard nothing of the French intention to stage this *opéra bouffe* outrage; but I guessed instantly that too close an investigation might be inadvisable, and I suggested as much to Sir Francis when he returned from the field of battle.

Sir Basil Thomson says\* that the chauffeur of Sir Francis Elliot recognized one of the men as a member of the French service and told his master, on which Sir Francis taxed de Roquefeuil with having arranged the whole matter.

Unfortunately for this tale Sir Francis Elliot did not have a chauffeur.

A great stir was made by the Paris Press over this ridiculous business. M. Guillemin actually asked the Admiral to give him a guard of French sailors for the Legation, and a demand was sent in that the Reservist Leagues should be dissolved.

Some of the Royalist apologists in relating this incident attribute to it the resignation of Zaïmis, which occurred on

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 133.



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September 11th. That is nonsense. The resignation of Mr. Zaïmis was brought about by his knowledge of the intended surrender of Cavalla, and his realization that the military party did not intend to allow the tentative conversations with the Entente in which he had been indulging to end happily with Greece's entry into the War on the side of the Allies. On September 11th eight thousand men of the Cavalla garrison under Colonel Hatzopoulos surrendered to the Germano-Bulgarians with all their arms, guns, munitions, and stores. Most of the troops of the Serres Division, however, refused to surrender and retreating to Salonica joined the revolutionary movement which had just begun there, but with which Venizelos had as yet not identified himself. The other three divisions were taken away to Germany and interned at Goerlitz.

There is no doubt that the invasion of Macedonia was a deliberate electioneering coup engineered to deprive Venizelos of some sixty Parliamentary seats, and this plot provides another theory for the contents of that Document 145 which we failed to secure. Simultaneously with this humiliating transportation of Greek troops to Germany King Constantine received a letter from the Kaiser that within a month the Germans would have finished with Roumania and that they then intended to throw Sarraïl and his army into the sea.

## THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

After the Cavalla surrender and the overrunning of so much Macedonian territory it was decided to demand the postponement of the General Election. The optimism in diplomatic circles about the entry of the King into the War vanished. When on September 18th Mr. Calogeropoulos was invited to form a Government which included a notoriously bitter enemy of the Entente like Roupfos, as Minister of the Interior, the

Allied Ministers declined to recognize the new Government, and no communication of any kind was held with it.

Meanwhile, the French Intelligence had drawn up another list of people to be deported, and this included important political personages like Dr. Streit and military leaders of high rank like General Dousmanis and Colonel Metaxas.

On September 19th the new Ministry offered to enter the War on the side of the Entente, but hedged in this offer with so many 'if's and and's' that it meant nothing. It was obvious that King Constantine and his party were playing for time and staking everything on the collapse of Roumania. The French were all this while urging Mr. Venizelos to take the plunge and proclaim a provisional government in the Islands; but he still held back, being anxious to obtain assurance of support for his action from Great Britain.

As I remember, Consul Rawlins actually came over with some Cretan notables from Canea and tried to persuade Sir Francis Elliot to give him authority to announce the British Government's support of the revolutionary movement in Crete. The result of this was that he was ordered to remain in Athens for the present. Mr. J. C. Lawson gives a good account \* of the revolutionary movement in Crete; but his complete ignorance of all that was happening anywhere else coupled with an exaggerated notion of his own influence makes his narrative valueless as anything more than a guide to local events.

On September 22nd the Foreign Office telegraphed to Athens that the British Government had proposed to Paris that the King should be warned that if he did not declare war by October 1st the Allies would not be answerable for the consequences. Now this proposal was made at the instance of Sir Francis Elliot and the consequences for which responsibility was to be declined were the proclamation by Mr. Venizelos of a

\* *Tales of Ægean Intrigue.*

provisional government. This first positive step forward by the Foreign Office toward a solution of the situation in Greece alarmed the French with the idea that Venizelos was to move under the auspices of the British Government. The proposed ultimatum was held up for discussion, and meanwhile the French redoubled their efforts to spur Venizelos into immediate action. He can hardly be blamed for not waiting any longer for open British support. At the same time, by moving when he did without guarantees of goodwill from Great Britain and without waiting for the French to give their assent to the proposed ultimatum, he gave the King an opportunity to maintain that his precipitate action had prevented his joining the Allies by the evidence it afforded that the movement headed by Mr. Venizelos was primarily anti-dynastic.

The muddled account of events at this time which Sir Basil Thomson \* gives is too full of misstatements to answer in detail. He even attributes a premature mortality to Lord Hardinge, on whom without a shadow of justification he throws the blame for refusing the Greek offer to enter the War on the side of the Allies.

On the night of September 25th, Mr. Venizelos and Admiral Coundouriotis went down to the Plato Restaurant † at Old Phaleron. At four o'clock in the morning a French motor-boat came to the jetty. The *Hesperia* was standing off with all her lights out, and at five o'clock Venizelos and Coundouriotis were on their way to Crete. Their reception at Canea was inspiring. When the Provisional Government was proclaimed only one hundred people in Crete requested to leave, out of loyalty to the King. They and their families arrived in Athens at the end of the month. The scenes of enthusiasm were repeated in Chios, in Samos, and in Mytilene. Two days later General Danglis

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 138.

† *Athenian Memories*, pp. 19-20.

came to the Annexe to ask if I would make arrangements for him to join Venizelos. The political and naval creators of a great Greece had already left in the high hope of creating an even greater Greece, and it was appropriate that one of the chief military creators should form the third of that triumvirate. General Danglis was a little man of the Lord Roberts type of soldier. He was not eloquent, but the memory of him sitting in my room on that September day is more impressive than any eloquence could have made it. It was not my privilege to make the actual arrangements for his embarkation, for the official attitude of the British Government toward the Provisional Government had not been discovered yet, although in the Islands the Navy had deeply committed British policy to the open support of what soon became a revolutionary movement.

When Venizelos left Athens he was followed by many patriots, and every night the Annexe was full of officers and soldiers bivouacking in the various offices. The selflessness of their patriotism was complete, for at this date there was no guarantee of any future for them. They hazarded the chances of promotion. They forsook their homes, their families, and their friends. They esteemed nothing except the honour and the glory and the greatness of their country. Naked as it were they went northward, and they flung the world away for an ideal. The memory of those men has been an inspiration to me ever since.

It was not to be expected that the sailors to whom the universally beloved and respected Coundouriotis had set such an example would be content to linger. His lead was followed by *T.B.14*. Lieutenant Voulgaris had taken Admiral Miaoulis in *T.B.14* to shoot quail on the island of Poros, off the east coast of Greece. When he went ashore Voulgaris gave the order to steam away and left the Admiral marooned. The destroyer *Thetis*, commanded by Lieutenant Vouvoulis, was suspected of

intending to join Venizelos and was ordered to moor alongside the *Arethusa*. Suddenly the Lieutenant on the deck of the *Arethusa* saw the *Thetis* getting up steam and called out through a megaphone to know the reason. Lieutenant Vouvoulis shouted back that he was coming alongside; but putting on full steam he made straight for the open sea. It looked as if the guns of the *Hydra* and the *Arethusa* were going to open fire on the *Thetis*; but our Military Control boat flying the Blue Ensign deliberately got in the line of fire and before anybody would make up his mind to take the risk of giving the order to fire, the *Thetis* was gone, the cheers of the crew floating back across the harbour. The defection of the *Hydra*, a gunnery cruiser which was moored to the quay at the Piræus, was accomplished by a ruse. As the details were unknown to me at the time, I am not able to contradict in detail Sir Basil Thomson's unctuous account of the business.\* His manipulation of fact, however, is generally so shameless that I hesitate to accept it. It should be noted that the crew of the *Hydra* had been specially chosen for their subordination to the Government, and that they did not represent the spirit of the Greek Navy, which was typically expressed by the action of *T.B.14* and the *Thetis*.

On the last day of September eight hundred officers and soldiers left by the Messageries S.S. *Ernest Simon* to join the movement in Salonica.

Sir Francis Elliot's mind was still firmly set on reconciling the King and Mr. Venizelos. I did not believe at the time, and I do not believe now, that there was ever the slightest possibility of achieving that desirable state of affairs. His Majesty was firmly convinced that Mr. Venizelos planned to dethrone him. Mr. Venizelos was as firmly convinced that His Majesty was resolved to destroy him. It was a waste of time to attempt to reconcile the personally and politically irreconcilable.

\* *The Allied Secret Service in Greece*, pp. 143-5.

The diplomatic history of the last fortnight of September is confused by the various influences at work. In London Prince Andrew and in Petrograd Prince Nicholas had been presenting the whole of the Venizelist movement as nothing but a threat to the dynasty. The Foreign Office at the same time was beginning to wonder if it was wise to allow British policy to trail at the heels of France, and opinion was gradually hardening, in spite of steady opposition in high quarters, that Great Britain must show some open evidence of an inclination toward support of Venizelos.

In France, M. Briand, who was much under the influence of Princess George of Greece, was anxious to avoid taking any action to injure the dynasty. G.Q.G. at Chantilly did not encourage the idea of Greek intervention, because it disliked the idea of Sarrail's making any progress on the Salonica front as much as G.H.Q. at St. Omer had disliked the idea of Sir Ian Hamilton's making any progress at Gallipoli. De Roquefeuil, behind whom was Admiral Lacaze, the French Minister of Marine, did not care a button about either Mr. Venizelos or King Constantine; he was filled with an ambition to establish the predominance of his own country in the Near East. In this he saw eye to eye with Sarrail, who at the same time planned in the future to make his success in the Near East a stepping-stone to a Military Dictatorship of France. Admiral Dartige du Fournet was a stupid man whose largest idea was that of his own importance. Having been given plenipotentiary powers to act without consulting the diplomatic representatives of the Entente in Athens, he still further confused the situation. If Admiral Dartige du Fournet had not resented de Roquefeuil's power so much, he might easily with the powers granted to him have made the first step in de Roquefeuil's project a reality.

Italian policy was concentrated upon keeping the King's throne safe, because Italy dreaded French predominance in the

Eastern Mediterranean, and dreaded equally any action on the part of Great Britain to strengthen the hand of Venizelos and thus create a strong Greece whose future would be bound up with that of Great Britain. The Italians had been anxious to send a warship with the abortive naval demonstration in June; but they had been told it was none of their business. Since then they had on August 28th declared war on Germany, and they now suggested the dispatch of a contingent to Salonica in order to find an excuse for establishing their influence in Northern Epirus to promote their Albanian schemes.

British military opinion was of course definitely against any extension of activity on the Salonica front, and the hope of charming Bulgaria out of the War was still a lively one. British political opinion at home was preoccupied with the already impending collapse of the Asquith Government. Politicians were on the alert not so much to justify their policy as themselves. 'Business as usual' had been superseded by the equally fatal slogan about getting on with the War, which was made an excuse to stifle all criticism. People forgot that a war was not won merely by wearing down the enemy's resistance and wearing out themselves in doing it. Yet public opinion at home was unanimous in supposing that we had tacitly encouraged Venizelos to commit himself and his fellow patriots and that expediency brightened by honour demanded that we should see him through. It was a moment that offered an enviable opportunity to imaginative statescraft. With the continuously increasing likelihood of a complete Russian collapse there need have been no hesitation in considering the possibility of being able to offer Constantinople to the Greeks, and none at all about guaranteeing them Smyrna and the coast of Asia Minor. Italian and Serbian aspirations would require satisfaction; but now was the moment to settle Italy's claim upon the Dalmatian coast, now the moment to decide the future of the Dodecanese and finally discourage

Italian ambition to dominate the Levant. Now was the moment to assert Great Britain's claim to guard the threshold of the East by becoming the instrument of Hellenic power. If once it were understood in Greece that Great Britain stood behind Venizelos more firmly than France his opponents would shrink to a handful of disappointed politicians supported by a comparatively minute fashionable and aristocratic clique. To be sure, all this involved an indestructible belief in the ultimate defeat of the Central Powers; but of this belief Venizelos himself was the most uncompromising exponent and the most encouraging fanatic.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

Colonel Plunkett reached Athens early in September and at once showed himself cordially appreciative of the work we had done. To myself he said plainly that he intended to identify himself with the way in which the Military Control Office was being conducted. Moreover, he assured me that he was determined to get our position in Athens fairly represented at home. To an ambitious man the post in Athens would have seemed a wonderful chance for self-aggrandisement. It would have been perfectly easy for Plunkett to make my position intolerable and so drive me into asking to be transferred elsewhere. Instead of that he took advantage of every occasion to give me the credit for anything I had done. 'Decent' may seem a poor hackneyed epithet, but from the heart I say that Plunkett was 'decent', and it was the kind of modest epithet that 'Plunks' himself would have preferred me to write. God rest his soul!

The first job was to get the money we wanted, and I wrote a hurried memorandum on the subject which Plunkett endorsed and forwarded direct to Alexandria.

About this time W. H., the head of the E.M.S.I.B. in Salonica, had been eliminated by the Military Authorities. So I



asked him if he would go up to Volo with seven agents and apply Port Control there, with the understanding that I would do my best to link him up with Janina in the west by a series of sub-controls across Greece. E. G. Hole \* had just been transferred from Mytilene to Janina as Vice-Consul, and I had supplied him with the funds to start a small organization there. It was becoming important to know what the Italians were up to in that direction.

Two or three days after W. H. had been at Volo, de Roquefeuil came round to see me in a state of agitation to say that W. H. had sent an agent into Eubœa and that surely I must realize he already had an excellent service covering the whole of Eubœa. I saw at once that de Roquefeuil did not at all like the threatened extension of British influence, and I knew that within a short time we should be in for a struggle with the French over controls in Greece. I told de Roquefeuil we would certainly recall the agent from Eubœa, but said I hoped he would not raise any opposition to W. H.'s remaining at any rate temporarily at Volo, where he was occupied with submarine Intelligence to which Sells attached considerable importance. Sells was away on leave at this time, but I knew he would support me when he came back. I told Plunkett about the impending difficulties, and he suggested that I should draw up a memorandum asking for an expansion and elaboration of Control in Greece.

This was forwarded to Alexandria. Alexandria telegraphed it to London, whence presently came back a reply asking Plunkett to state his reasons for wishing to place expensive agents at six places, all of them undecipherable.

This was the telegram which finally decided me that nothing more could be done unless I went back to England myself and explained matters on the spot.

\* *Gallipoli Memories*, p. 316.

## SEPTEMBER

I really was in need by now of a month's rest before winter came. At the moment it did not look as if there would be any change in the Greek situation of such importance as to need my presence in Athens, whereas if I went to London I might hope to present a different impression of what was going on in Greece than that which evidently prevailed. It seemed vital to try to dispel the prejudice that deprived us of C's support, which Plunkett thought could be done only by personal influence. Any further hesitation on my part about leaving Athens was removed by Sir Francis Elliot's telling me that he would ask Lord Hardinge to make a point of seeing me in London so that I might explain orally about the Greek situation much that was impossible to explain in writing.

### DRESSING UP

The last few days before my departure were brightened by two incidents. One morning Ricaud came in, his eyes glowering fiercely, to say that a son of a Russian ex-Consul somewhere in Asia Minor had been indulging in flagrant espionage and, as the French Admiral was obstinately refusing the help of the French Intelligence Service in any way, to ask me if I would arrange to kidnap the spy, whom we will call Theodore, and hand him over to the British Naval Authorities to be sent up to Salonica at the first opportunity, where he would be tried by court-martial and shot.

"What's the evidence against him, Ricaud?"

"The evidence is conclusive," said Ricaud. "This questionnaire has been taken from his pocket-book."

He produced a long questionnaire about the disposition of the troops round Salonica. I assured Ricaud I would see what I could do in the matter, and set inquiries going about Theodore. These inquiries elicited that Theodore was a young man of about nineteen who seemed to spend most of his time making

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love to the governesses and nurses of Cephissia. He was also promising marriage to many of them and on the strength of that inducing them to part with any spare cash they had. I decided to send for Theodore and question him myself. When he arrived at my office I saw a good-looking and effeminate youth elaborately overdressed. After I had talked with him for a while, I realized that he was suffering from vanity and that the questionnaire was probably nothing more serious than an attempt to impress one of his susceptible victims with his romantic importance.

Two or three days previously some frozen carcasses of meat thrown overboard from a troopship had been washed ashore on the coast near Athens, and one of the Government rags had published a long account of headless corpses supposed to be victims of the British secret police.

"Did you read about those headless bodies washed ashore beyond Phaleron?" I asked.

Theodore said that he had.

"So you know the kind of man I am?" I asked.

He bowed with signs of nervousness.

"Well, Theodore," I went on sternly. "You have given me an account of your actions during the last two months. You have boasted in the most heartless way of your success with these unfortunate young women, but you have not yet explained to me how you came to write this questionnaire!"

With this I held up the incriminating document.

Theodore looked as if he were going to faint, as in sibilant and agitated French he assured me that he had only written the questionnaire as a *blague* and that he had never had the slightest intention of using it seriously.

"It's all very well for you to say you wrote this out for a joke; but jokes of that kind are extremely dangerous in war time, so dangerous indeed that half a dozen of my men are wait-

ing outside now in the garden at the back of the Annexe to shoot you as soon as I've condemned you to death."

On hearing this sentence Theodore uttered a shriek and grovelled on his knees for mercy.

"I'm sorry, Theodore, but the best I can do for you is to allow you to have your head cut off instead."

"No, no," the wretched boy screamed. "I'm not a real spy. On my word of honour, I only wrote out those questions for a joke."

I rang the bell for Tucker.

"Mr. Tucker, how many spies were shot last week?"

"I think it was six, sir," Tucker replied grandly.

"And two more were strangled?"

"That's right, sir."

"And then there was that bunch whose heads we chopped off?"

"That was the week before, sir."

"Thank you, Tucker, that was all I wanted to know. The firing-party is ready?"

"All ready, sir. Nothing more you want?"

"Nothing more. Send the men to blindfold the prisoner when I ring."

"Mercy, mercy!" Theodore moaned.

I seemed to ponder while the wretched young man sobbed.

"Well, Theodore," I said at last. "I've decided to give you another chance. I will spare your life if you will show some proof of being sorry for what you have done."

"I'll do anything you tell me. Anything as long as you won't have me shot," Theodore declared.

I turned to Tucker, who was standing by with an expression on his face that Rhadamanthus would have envied.

"Mr. Tucker, I believe that the charwoman whose duty it is to scrub out the Annexe is ill. Instead of our engaging

another woman, Theodore will scrub out the Annexe three times a week in future."

"I will do anything," Theodore cried, "I will do anything if you will only grant me my life."

"It is understood that you are to scrub the floors of the Annexe and perform any other menial tasks that Mr. Tucker may set you. There is another thing, Theodore. I understand that you have proposed marriage to various confiding young women. Steps must be taken to stop these gallantries."

"I will not speak to any woman ever again if only you will spare my life," Theodore vowed passionately.

"Ah, but I fear your good looks are too dangerous," I began, at which he simpered like an idiotic schoolgirl. "And therefore," I went on, "I must put you out of the way of doing any more harm."

"Not by shooting me?" Theodore gasped.

"No, not by shooting you—for the present anyway—but by refusing to let you shave or cut your hair until you have my permission to do so. Mr. Tucker, if Theodore shows any signs of having been near a barber when he comes to scrub out the Annexe you will have him shot at once."

"I certainly will, sir."

"Now go away, you silly young fool," I said to the convicted spy. "And be thankful that by a lucky chance you did not fall into the hands of the French, for you would not have been treated so kindly by them."

At first, Ricaud was inclined to say that the punishment on Theodore was too flippant; but at last even he had to admit, as day by day Theodore's hair and beard grew longer and the knees of his trousers shinier from kneeling to scrub out the Annexe, that perhaps after all it was an effective punishment for what I had convinced him was nothing but a piece of foolish

vanity. At the end of two months Theodore was going to resemble a wild man of the woods. His reign over the governesses and nurses of Cephissia had closed in ignominy. When he was discharged I felt that it would not be my fault if he failed to behave sensibly in future.

Another result of unbridled vanity was the calling up to the Colours of Mr. Watney Hyde. Watney Hyde was first reported to us at the end of 1915 as being in the constant company of various Germans at Patras. His behaviour throughout the year had been singularly suspicious for an Englishman, and the more we found out about him the less there was to his credit. At the same time we could not obtain any positive evidence that he had acted in any way directly contrary to the interests of his country, and it was impossible to do more than keep an eye on his behaviour. Still, he was a perpetual nuisance in various ways, and when one afternoon toward the end of September he was reported to be sitting in the Panhellenion Café dressed in a khaki uniform and announcing that he had been appointed special war correspondent of *The Times* on the Salonica front, I thought it was time to deal with him drastically. There had been several cases in Athens of Englishmen arriving there dressed up in uniform and pretending that they were warriors. One fellow had recently imposed himself on the British colony as a V.C. and had been presented by subscription with a gold watch before we heard of his game and had him returned to Salonica as the deserter he was.

I sent a message down to the Panhellenion that I wished to speak to Watney Hyde immediately.

He took care to change out of his uniform before presenting himself at the Annexe, as unpleasant an individual as one could wish to meet. He had a greasy yellowish complexion, cod's eyes, and a large dank moustache, and he wore a representation of St. George and the Dragon in enamel as a tie-pin.

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"I hear you are anxious to be in uniform, Hyde," I said.  
"So I have called you up to the Colours."

"What do you mean, you've called me up to the Colours? Don't be funny, please."

"I mean just what I say, Hyde. I have called you up to the Colours. You will proceed to Malta the day after to-morrow. From there you will be sent home to England, where you will report to the Military Authorities."

"What do you think you're playing at?" he asked insolently.

"I'm being perfectly serious, Hyde."

"But you can't call me up to the Colours in a neutral capital," he protested.

"Can't I? You don't know what I can do, Hyde. However, you'll find out. And, listen, don't think you're going to get up to Salonica as an interpreter, because I shall advise the War Office that you are not fit for such a post. The proper place for you is in a Labour battalion, to which I hope they'll send you."

"I suppose you think you're being funny, don't you?" said Hyde.

"You'll have time to find that out on the voyage home from Malta."

"Well, I'm going round to the Legation to ask Colonel Fairholme if you're empowered to call me up to the Colours in a neutral capital."

"Go round to the Military Attaché, by all means. But you won't get any satisfaction out of him, and as you will certainly leave the day after to-morrow for Malta, I advise you to put your affairs in order. The alternative, by the way, is being arrested for associating with the enemy and being sent up to Salonica to be dealt with by court-martial."

"I'll see what the Military Attaché has to say about all this," he blustered.

As soon as he had left my office I telephoned through to Colonel Fairholme to warn him that a nuisance called Watney Hyde was on his way round to complain about my having called him up to the Colours.

"So will you be good enough to tell him that you can do nothing about it, Colonel?" I requested.

From the other end of the telephone I heard Fairy's fruitiest voice, evidently much perturbed.

"Now, look here, Mackenzie, you mustn't involve me in any of your irregularities."

"There's no need at all for you to be involved, Colonel. All I want you to say to this rascal is that if Captain Mackenzie has called him up to the Colours you don't see what you can do about it. He's a thorough nuisance. I've had an eye on him for nearly a year, and now he's masquerading about Athens in khaki."

"Well, I shall decline to see this man," said Fairholme.

"That will be a very satisfactory line of action, Colonel," I agreed.

Two days later, Watney Hyde left the Piræus for Malta en route for London, and the story will be continued next month.



## CHAPTER X: OCTOBER

### MALTA

ON Wednesday, October 4th, I went on board the battleship *Exmouth* which was proceeding from Kersatsini to Malta. After the hectic, anxious, and incessantly busy life of the last few months it was like a progress in sleep to glide with such an air of stately leisure past the line of Allied battleships moored against that classic background. It was almost to a day the anniversary of the Battle of Salamis and I was thinking that the Royalists who counted Venizelos as a second Themistocles must be regarding these ships as worse than the invading Persian armada of nearly twenty-five centuries ago. The crews of every ship we passed were standing at the salute while ensigns and tricolours were dipping. A Marine band was playing on the Rear-Admiral's flagship. On the quarter-deck of the *Exmouth* we stood in ceremonious and rigid farewell. The glare of Athens was forgotten beneath that great blue and white October sky.

It was fair-weather sailing all the way, and in a battleship one seems very near to the sea. I spent an idle but ineffably rich day, travelling with no more sense of effort than the great swan-breasted clouds high over head. Southward down to Matapan and westward on across the Mediterranean we sailed. There was a rumour of a submarine waiting for us off Matapan; but the two destroyers that escorted us could look after that. The idleness and azure were exquisite. There were pleasant evenings in the ward-room of bridge and gossip, and a jolly game of some kind in the gun-room. I recall a Jaques-like First

Lieutenant, lean and sententious. I recall a chatty watch-keeping Lieutenant, and many pink gins, and a padre whose conversation was that of the 'spiky' young clergymen I had known in the 'nineties. As we drew near to Malta the propinquity of enemy submarines was signalled and we began to zigzag while the two destroyers steamed round and round us as a couple of colliers run round a herd of sheep. *Exmouth's* sister ship *Russell* had struck a mine and gone down just outside Malta not so long before, and we seemed the easiest of marks on that velvet sea.

But we reach Valetta safely, and as we glide through the narrow entrance of the harbour we stand at the salute while the ship's band plays '*Here we are, here we are, here we are again!*'

The emotional quality of the scene cannot be given in words. Everything is moving past us in music and colour. Gun crews salute from the shore batteries. Flags signal our arrival. Flags dip in salute. Sentries are presenting arms. Fortifications, houses, faces at windows, bright curtains are swimming past us on either side until at last we reach the inner harbour where the battleship will spend some weeks refitting. The band has ceased to play its jaunty tune. The scene no longer moves. The world seems to have come to an end for a moment, and then begins again in the bustle and noise of disembarkation.

I was just being depressed by that empty lost feeling in a place where everybody was hurrying ashore with such familiarity when I saw a Marine officer coming along the quay-side, obviously on the look out for somebody. He was a tall fair man, in light khaki with the red tabs of a Staff Officer, and I had a notion he must be that Captain Farmer with whom for many weeks now I had been in close and friendly communication over Intelligence matters; and Farmer it was, as delightful in reality as the picture I had formed of him from our correspondence. He told me he had booked rooms for me in an hotel until the mail ship sailed for Taranto two or three days hence, and pre-

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sently we were walking through the arched vaults of the old bagnios hewn out of the rock which once housed the stores of the Knights, but which were now mostly used for naval stores. In one of them was the office of Major Lampen, the Naval Staff Officer for Intelligence. Lampen was just as cordial as Farmer, and it was easy to understand why intercommunication between Athens and Malta had never been marred by a single misunderstanding.

Much of my time in Malta was to be taken up with going into various questions in connexion with the prisoners interned there, from whom I had brought a packet of petitions to be investigated. One of these letters I noted down as a good example of Levantine English. The writer was an Englishman, with a good bucolic English name, who was arrested in the area of the Dardanelles operations in the summer of 1915:

*St. Clement's Camp, Malta.*  
18/9/1916.

*To the Honourable  
Capt. C. Mackenzie,  
Appendix of the British Embassy,  
Dragatzamou,  
ATHENS.*

*Honourable Sir:*

*I learn from the newspapers the capture of chiefs and employes of the Austro-German organizations, and availing the opportunity, I take the liberty to beg you to be so kind as to examine well the persons arrested from whom I am sure in advance, you will be convinced if I were in the slightest possible way guilty, let it be also of the least treachery.*

*Already you have in possession all the equipments and documents regarding them, and consequently you are in position to examine*

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*the occurrences and seeing the result you will be persuaded that I was an innocent victim of an infamous calumination.*

*I feel myself very proud, because at least presented me the opportunity to prove my innocence and simultaneously the sincerity of my services against [sic] my country.*

*I consider superfluous asking to justify myself so far as the above facts will convince you of my full sincerity and innocence, therefore I beg you warmly to examine once more my matter, and am sure in advance, that will fall down every kind of accusation against myself, and so would rendered me my freedom which I hope to utilize once more for my country.*

*Trusting that my present would not be put aside, but receive the necessary consideration, and bringing forward my thanks,*

*I remain,*

*Honourable Sir,*

*Your obedient servant*

*the falsehoodly calumniated*

*B———*

The internment camp was on the top of a hill with a magnificent view of all the harbours and shipping. On the whole it was not a bad place, though of course too dusty and crowded to be described as pleasant. Many of the prisoners had spent their time in making rock gardens, and the recreation ground resembled the beach at Margate. Shortly before I arrived in Malta the German prisoners had presented a petition to have Captain Müller, the famous Captain of the *Emden*, removed on account of the way he bullied them. He had just been sent off to England in the battleship *London*. It was odd that the man who was selected by popular opinion in Great Britain as the type of a sporting and chivalrous opponent should have behaved so objectionably to his compatriots, whom he treated like dogs. However, it was told me in Malta that Captain Müller had expressed a lively regret that he did behave in so chivalrous and

sporting a way when he was damaging British commerce and leading the Navy such a dance. "I wish I had known then," he was reported to have said, "the way the war was going to be fought by us." One of Captain Müller's amusements had been photography, and in order to indulge in this hobby he was always laying in supplies of a certain chemical, a property of which is that when used as a secret ink it will react only to photography. From the camp he was able to note the movements of every ship, and it was suspected that he had been communicating through Maltese agents a variety of information in his secret ink. It may be doubted, however, if any of this information ever reached the German Admiralty.

One prisoner whom I was delighted to meet was Captain Alfred Hoffmann. He was not in the big camp, but was comfortably installed with his wife in a pleasant row of cottages near one of the harbours. He had a piano and plenty of beer, and I spent an hour with him drinking beer while he played Schumann. Both he and his wife expressed their appreciation of the kindness which had been shown to them in Malta, and told me that they had been promised even pleasanter quarters on the island of Gozo where they would spend the winter. I parted from Captain and Mrs. Hoffmann as one parts from old friends.

Farmer and I dined together at the Club that night in what must be one of the most beautiful club dining-rooms in the world. Before dinner while we were drinking our cocktails in the famous bar downstairs I was told a grim story about some of the survivors of the *Russell*. A few of them had come in here for a drink after they had been rescued, and suddenly one of them had put a hand to his throat and choked. Presently others did the same and all were carried off to the hospital, where several died from cordite poisoning, by the fumes of which they had been gassed when the explosion took place twenty-four hours earlier.

At the Club I met a cousin of mine, Gerald McKenna, who was in command of a destroyer then refitting. He must have been about the youngest destroyer skipper in the Service, and he seemed to find it difficult not to laugh when his Second in Command, who was lunching with us, called him "Sir." So, too, did the Second in Command. They were a humorous pair; Gerald McKenna, short, plump, and dark, and the Second in Command, tall, thin, and fair.

After interviewing various interned suspects, the release of many of whom I afterwards recommended and succeeded in obtaining, I visited an Intelligence office in another of those glorious Auberges of the Knights of Malta, in time of peace the Mess of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers. The genial Major in charge was very proud of the perfection to which the indexing system had been brought. I looked enviously at their filing cabinets with thousands of cardboard folders all beautifully lettered and numbered, and most enviously of all at the dozen or so rosy-cheeked young English indexing clerks who were doing their bit to show how splendid the women were during the War.

"Any name you want, any name you want, Mackenzie," said the Major, beaming. "Ask me for a name."

I felt like the member of an audience called up on the stage to assist a thought-reader as I asked for the dossier of some rascal, the details of which we had supplied from Athens. One rosy-cheeked young woman hurried to the boxes of the card-index, and returned presently to equip another rosy-cheeked young woman with the necessary clue to send her scurrying across to an enormous chest of drawers whence with another clue she in turn hurried over to a third rosy-cheeked young woman, who with the final clue to the whereabouts of the required dossier opened a filing-cabinet to bring the culprit's misdeeds to light.

"Magnificent system!" said the Major to me.

"It seems rather elaborate," I commented.

"But it's foolproof, that's the best of it. It takes twelve index clerks to keep our lists."

I thought of the huddle and muddle of papers in the Annexe of the British Legation in Athens and of Miss Chapman hauling out albums of files and using the most unsecretary-like language as she turned over paper after paper to find the buried information I was requiring, and I thought how easy clerical life was in Great Britain and her dependencies compared with clerical life in a neutral capital disturbed by political factions and hostile propagandists.

"I'm so sorry, Major X," said the rosy-cheeked young woman in charge of the sanctum sanctorum of filing-cabinets, "but I don't seem able to find the man you want."

"Can't find him?" the Major gasped. "What an extraordinary thing! Well, this is the first time, my dear fellow, that our indexing system has gone wrong. Miss Smith, are you sure you gave Miss Jones the correct details from your cupboard?"

"Indeed, yes, Major, quite sure," Miss Smith declared firmly.

"Then perhaps Miss Brown was wrong?" suggested the Major, turning to the first rosy-cheeked indexer.

"No, Major, I don't think so," she insisted. "I think this is the name that Captain Mackenzie asked me for."

I confirmed Miss Brown's confidence; but, search though they might, neither Miss Smith nor Miss Jones could find any details about the gentleman in question. His misdeeds were buried beneath thousands of cardboard folders.

"Well, I assure you, Mackenzie," said the Major to me, "this is the very first time in my experience that our system has gone wrong. It's most extraordinary!"

I decided after this that perhaps our system in Athens, with myself damning, with Miss Chapman damning, and with

Tucker vowing he had never seen the blooming paper, and with Hasluck, his head on one side like a duck's, suggesting various reference numbers, was not so much inferior after all.

After Mass on Sunday I hired a car and drove out to lunch with Lord and Lady Methuen. It was a hot dusty drive between checkers of dry stone walls; but the Governor's country house was set in an oasis of trees, and the shadowy green-lit dining-room was cool as a country house in Hampshire. The other guest besides myself at lunch was Lady McMahon, the wife of the High Commissioner for Egypt, who was on her way back from Egypt. Lord Methuen was a most impressive figure. He was then over seventy, tall and spare and handsome and as upright as a subaltern. His voice was more like a poet's than a soldier's, and the crimson velvet tabs of a Field-Marshal gave a kind of softness and romance to his khaki uniform. No doubt at lunch we talked about the situation in Greece, but my memory has not preserved a single detail of the conversation. I think I must have been too much carried away by admiration of that great gentleman who was already a soldier ten years after the Crimea War. Yet, without being able to remember a word of what was said, lunch in that shaded dining-room is one of my most vivid pictorial memories of the War.

Another experience I enjoyed in Malta was being entertained to dinner in the Mess of my own ship *Egmont*, to the strength of which I had been transferred from the *Victory*. And a curious ship *Egmont* was, consisting as she did of a series of buildings on shore. Farmer himself lived on board her, his cabin a pleasant and commodious room. Soon after I left Malta, Farmer was sent to Kingston in Jamaica as Naval Intelligence Officer. He left a tradition behind him of alliance and friendship with Athens, and when the Military Control Office moved to Syra in the Cyclades we always had the support of Malta in various difficulties.



## GREEK MEMORIES

### TARANTO AND ROME

On Monday, October 9th, I left Malta for Taranto in the mail ship, and here again memory fails me. I have forgotten her oriental name, but I know that she was a very fast packet and possessed of a most vicious motion, being narrow in the beam like a yacht. The ship was full of a heterogeneous collection of officers of both services, most of them going home on leave.

It was during this voyage that I suffered one of the worst blows that occurred to me during the War. While we steamed up the Sicilian coast I was leaning over the port rail and watching the peak of Etna, which was still bright and rosy in the sunset when for us below, twilight with a cold breeze was already coming swiftly from the east. While I was pondering that sublime shape, which seemed to float between sea and sky not more substantial than the smoke of its own crater, a sudden gust of wind seized my cap and flung it into the sea. Not only was it the best cap I owned during the War, it was the only cap I had with me at the time. It was a cap made by Locke of St. James's Street, and it was a cap worthy of that famous hatter. It was a cap which I had bought from Eddie Keeling at Gallipoli. It was a cap fit for Poseidon, not our agent, but the sea-king himself, and the Oceanides must have coveted it for their monarch's brow. Such a tribute was no consolation for losing the only cap I had. The problem was really an appalling one. There I was bound for London with no prospect that I could see of obtaining another cap, at any rate until I reached Taranto; and the notion of going on board Admiral Kerr's flagship *Queen* without being able to offer or return a single salute except by bobbing my head like an actress taking a call pierced my soul. I turned away despondently from that view of the darkening coast line of Sicily and of Etna's bulk mingling with the vaster night to make inquiries about the possibility of borrowing a cap.

I knew I was the only Marine on board, so there was no chance of obtaining a proper badge. However, I felt I could face life without a badge if I could only get a khaki cap of some kind. I consulted a kindly padre and begged him to take advantage of his sacred office to ask in turn of every officer on board the intimate question whether he had a spare cap. It was fruitless. There was nobody on board with a spare cap, and in the end I had to accept the kind offer of a naval officer to lend me a white helmet he had. It looked hideously inappropriate with a khaki uniform, and it wobbled about a good deal on my head owing to the removal of some of its inside, but at least it would enable me, however sheepishly, to salute, and I buoyed myself up with the hope of borrowing a cap from some Marine officer at Taranto.

As luck would have it we reached Taranto in a drench of rain, and in such weather I felt the incongruity of that white naval helmet more than ever. Admiral Mark Kerr had kindly sent across to ask me to lunch with him in his flagship, and I encouraged myself to believe that in such weather there would be nobody on the quarter-deck except the officer of the watch and a ship's corporal whose glassy eyes I nerved myself to brave; but luck was against me. In spite of the torrents of rain the awnings were out. As I went up the ladder feeling as if I was balancing a blancmange on my head I saw that the quarter-deck was thronged not merely with the officers of the *Queen*, but with Italian officers as well, for Admiral Kerr was receiving an Italian Admiral and his Staff. It seemed to me that I had saluted half the armed forces of Europe before I managed to reach the ward-room and divest myself of that infernal helmet.

"For God's sake introduce me to a Marine officer as soon as you can," I said to Alec Winter, the Admiral's Secretary. "I want to see if I can borrow a cap from him."

The Captain of Marines in the *Queen* said he would be

delighted to lend me a cap if it fitted me. The cap he produced was just too small, and it was also very stiff, so that when it was pressed down in order to hide the smallness I felt as if my head was enclosed in an iron band. Still, any discomfort was better than a journey back to England with only that helmet.

Preoccupation with the problem of headgear must have obliterated all impressions of Taranto, for the next thing I remember is lunch in Rome with Eddie Keeling and G. H. Tyrwhitt \* in Eddie Keeling's delightful rooms where we were waited upon by a butler with the manners and appearance of a cardinal. It was all exquisitely civilized and pleasant, for there was little in the atmosphere of Rome at that date to remind one that Italy was at war. Indeed, all through the War Rome preserved her sempiternal calm; and after the dust and dazzle and white glare of Athens those sunbrowned streets seemed thoroughfares to peace.

I visited the Bureau of Special Intelligence presided over by Colonel Gabriel. He had been a Political Officer and Resident in India and among other things largely responsible for the ceremonial of the Durbar. We lunched together in the Borghese Gardens, and while the seminarists of the various colleges were walking about demurely under the great pines in their brightly coloured cassocks, my host told me tales of old Cashmere. One of them left an impression of strange beauty which has not yet faded. He was accompanying the Prime Minister of Nepal back to the capital when news was received that there would be an attempt to assassinate him on the way. So the Prime Minister had a road cut through a virgin forest and galloped down this green ride between rows of flaming torches held to light him on his way, thus arriving twenty-four hours before the conspirators expected him.

Colonel Mombelli had given me a letter of introduction for

\* Lord Berners.

the Italian Director of Military Intelligence, whom I visited at the War Office. He was a fussy little general whose name I have forgotten. I was not impressed by him, but he promised to attach an Italian officer to the Military Control Office in Athens, and I hoped that a measure of much-needed co-ordination would result from this. I also interviewed the Director of Naval Intelligence, who had a Germanic name which I hesitate to spell wrongly. He was rather like Lord Carson in appearance; but, although his manner was as melodramatic and portentous as a detective in some absurd film, he had a much more intelligent grasp of the situation in Greece than his colleague in the Ministry of War.

I tried to find out what the British Intelligence Bureau in Rome represented, and as far as I could discover it was an offshoot of the British Military Mission to the Italian Armies in the Field, of which General Delmé-Radcliffe was Chief and Colonel Gabriel the Intelligence Officer. Any information not required for the Armies in the Field was sent to General Cockerill, the Director of Special Intelligence at the War Office. What he did with it I never discovered.

After a couple of days in Rome I went on to Paris, where I hoped I should find a hat which fitted me. By now my head seemed to be taking on the shape of an Aztec's. In the train going north a ludicrous incident occurred. I was sitting with the late Lord Brassey, then Colonel Lord Hythe, in the saloon after dinner, and listening to his account of the way his grandfather had built the line along which we were travelling, when two naval warrant-officers entered with several bottles of beer. They talked loudly and jovially, and kept inviting Lord Hythe and myself to move across to their table and join in their conviviality.

I could see that my companion was getting annoyed by the interruption, and finally he said to me:

"Look here, you're a Marine officer. You had better go across and tell those two fellows to behave themselves."

I stared at him. The idea of a Captain of Marines telling two shellback Gunners returning home on leave to behave themselves in a saloon car on an Italian railway was beyond my imagination. I should have been less disconcerted by a request to tell two gorillas to behave themselves in the darkest depths of the African jungle.

"I'm sorry, Colonel," I demurred, "but really, I assure you it would be no earthly use my saying anything."

"Very well," said the Colonel, "if you won't, why, then I must. This sort of behaviour lets us down with the Italians."

Lord Hythe was a prominent figure in Italy, the Managing Director of big mining interests in Sardinia, and I know not what besides. Up he got and walked across to the table where the two warrant-officers were sitting.

"Look here, my men," he said, "you must try to enjoy yourselves a little more quietly. You're not at home yet, you know."

Those two Gunners simply sat and stared at the Colonel, who, thinking he had impressed them, nodded cheerfully and walked back to his seat where he continued the interesting tales of his grandfather's experiences as a railway contractor.

Presently one of the warrant-officers rose unsteadily and rolled across the saloon with a bottle of beer toward the Colonel who was sitting with his back to him. When he reached the Colonel's chair he lifted the bottle of beer and solemnly tapped him several times with it on the head.

"That's all right," he said with a hospitable smile. "Come and have one with us, and then we'll all be jolly good pals together."

"Quite all right," echoed his friend from the table. "Jolly good pals together."

"I think I'll turn in now, and get some sleep," said Lord Hythe, with which remark he walked out of the saloon, much to my relief.

"Your friend's not offended, is he?" inquired the warrant-officer who had tapped him on the head with the beer-bottle.

"Oh, no, I think he's just feeling sleepy," I said.

"Of course this stuff isn't what you'd really call beer. Still, I wouldn't like to feel your friend was offended. So I hope you'll join us yourself."

I had a drink with the two reprobates, and then went off to bed myself, leaving them in the saloon singing a mournful duet or rather each of them singing a song of his own and occasionally stopping to argue either that the other was singing the wrong words or the wrong tune.

## PARIS

In Paris I visited the Inter-Allies Bureau which was in charge of Clive Bigham,\* whom I had last seen at Gallipoli. Working with Bigham was Henry Lygon, an old friend and contemporary at Magdalen.

"Ah, Henry," I said, "you'll be able to tell me where I can get a cap."

But Henry Lygon could not tell me, and the most passionate inquiries failed to discover any shop in Paris where one could buy a British military cap. It seemed to me outrageous at the time. Now that I am no longer suffering the compression of that iron band round my skull, I can take a calmer view and acknowledge that there was no particular reason why any shop in Paris should have sold British military caps.

Henry Lygon was the first undergraduate to venture down the High wearing one of the new 'motor caps' introduced in the year 1903. Those new motor caps, let me add, were the

\* Lord Mersey. *Gallipoli Memories*, p. 101.

caps we all wear to-day, and displaced the cricket-cap shape which until then had been the conventional mode. Henry Lygon's cap was a Lovat mixture and, as he passed the Schools, which were opposite our digs, I hear from the past somebody calling to me from the window:

"My god, come and look at that man Henry Lygon wearing one of those damned awful caps which Hall Brothers and Adamson's are trying to sell."

Not only for his clothes was Henry Lygon distinguished at Oxford. He was also President of the Union, though it was reported that he had achieved such an honour less on account of his eloquence than because the voters of the Union Society were so much surprised at finding a Magdalen man as a candidate for the Presidency that they had elected him out of curiosity. I remember that when Henry Lygon told us in the College lodge that he had been elected President of the Union we all thought he meant he had become a Poor Law Guardian, for it was our affectation at Magdalen in those days not even to know that there was such a place as the Union.

Later on when Lygon became a member of the London County Council, and was put in charge of the Fire Brigade, it was supposed that he had been given the post because he was the only member of the L.C.C. whose complexion could hold its own against the scarlet of the fire-engines and motor-cars of the Fire Brigade.

Now here was Henry Lygon in the Inter-Allies Bureau of Paris, still as ruddy as Absalom and still walking on the tips of his toes as he had walked long since down High Street, Oxford, wearing that newfangled cap. Remembering his interest in caps, I hoped that he might have a spare one to lend me, but he had nothing except a Flying Corps affair, which was of no use to me.

"But I'll drive you to Boulogne to-morrow," he offered.

"The boat leaves at two, and we must start from Paris at ten sharp."

"I should jolly well think we should have to start at ten sharp, Henry. You're surely not proposing to drive from Paris to Boulogne in four hours? Why, not even a Greek chauffeur would suggest doing that!"

"Do it easily," Henry declared.

What a drive! It was an open car, and the chauffeur had but one eye. Henry's luggage was excessive, and every time we turned a corner portmanteaus and kit-bags would leap about in the car like performing beasts in a cage. Even the lead-weighted bag I was taking from the Legation to the Foreign Office jumped about. It rained, and it blew, and I had no goggles. Then we punctured, and I stood miserably by the road in a whirl of dancing poplar leaves. After the puncture was mended the one-eyed chauffeur drove faster than ever. The only time we touched a moderate speed was through Abbeville, and then only because the drenched street was crowded with British Tommies. We reached the quayside at Boulogne just as they were preparing to take the gangways up on board.

"We should have done it comfortably," said Henry, "if it hadn't been for that puncture."

"Not comfortably, Henry," I said. "It could never be comfortable, travelling at sixty miles an hour in an open furniture van."

#### MY FIRST MEETING WITH C

As soon as I reached London I left my bag at the Foreign Office, and then drove straight to a hatter's to buy myself a cap.

"It's just a leetle bit tight, the one you're wearing, sir," observed the assistant. "It's left a regular mark on your forehead."



"I wonder it hasn't cracked my skull," I said.

I gave the assistant the address of the kind Captain of Marines who had lent me his cap, and told him to have it sent back by post to Taranto at once. Then I drove to Bury Street, where my wife had taken a service flat. A light khaki uniform was cold in the autumnal weather of London, and I lost no time in getting equipped at my tailor's with one of those enviable blue uniforms of the Royal Marines. Braced by the prospect of new clothes, I felt better able to face the ordeal of my first meeting with C.

In those days taxis were hard to find. So when I reached 2 Whitehall Court I told the driver to wait, for I fancied that ten minutes would probably be the extreme limit of the interview, judging by the tone of the voice at the other end of the telephone which had informed me that the Chief would see me at half-past five that afternoon. I inquired for the whereabouts of Captain Spencer's flat and was directed up the familiar staircase which led to the Authors' Club. I debated for a moment when I reached the first floor whether I would turn aside into the Club and have a strong brandy before climbing to the top of the building where C's headquarters were; the reflection that I might need one even more acutely ten minutes later dispelled the temptation.

It is always possible to tell by the attitude of subordinates what is likely to be the attitude of the head man in any show, and my reception upstairs by various young lieutenants of the R.N.V.R. was ambiguous. There was that air of nervous anticipation with which schoolboys watch the attitude of a victim who has been sent for by the Head. Even pink-faced lady secretaries came fluttering one after another on some excuse into the room where I was waiting, presumably to take a quick glance at the man who had ventured to defy C for nine months. After about ten minutes of this embarrassed waiting a young

man came in and announced that the Chief wished to see Captain Mackenzie immediately. I followed him into C's private room, tucked away under the roof, crowded with filing cupboards and shelves, and with the rest of the space almost entirely filled by C's big table. The dormer windows looked out across the plane-trees of the Embankment Gardens to the Thames, over which twilight was creeping. I saw on the other side of the table a pale clean-shaven man, the most striking features of whose face was a Punch-like chin, a small and beautifully fine bow of a mouth, and a pair of very bright eyes. He was dressed in the uniform of a naval captain.

C paid no attention when I came in, but remained bent over the table, perusing through a pair of dark horn-rimmed spectacles some document. I stood watching the blue dusk and the tarnished silver of the Thames until presently C took off the glasses, leant back in his chair, and stared hard at me for a long minute without speaking.

"Well?" he said finally.

"Mackenzie, sir," I replied. "Reporting to you from Athens."

"And what have you to say for yourself?" he asked, putting in an eyeglass and staring at me harder than ever.

Somehow I suppose I must have embarked on my tale in such a way as to win his attention, for after a few minutes he murmured in those faintly-slurred, immensely attractive accents of his:

"There's no need to tell me all this standing up. There's a chair beside you."

So I sat down and went on talking until about a quarter to seven, when a pink-faced secretary with a bundle of papers put her head round the door. She conveyed an impression that she had been deputed as the least likely person to have her head bitten off if she was interrupting matters of importance. C held

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out his hand for the papers and signed his name on them one after another in the bright green ink he always used. Presently we were left alone again.

At half-past seven he said:

"Well, you'd better stop and have some dinner with us."

"Thank you very much, sir," I said. "Would you mind if I went downstairs and sent away my taxi?"

"Have you been keeping a taxi waiting two hours?"

"Yes, sir, I thought you would probably be finished with me in a few minutes."

"My god," C exclaimed. "No wonder you're always asking for another thousand pounds every month!"

I went down to pay off the taxi, and when I came back the offices were empty. C took me into the dining-room where I was introduced to his wife as the man who had given him more trouble than anybody else in his service.

After dinner C showed me various books he had been buying. They were mostly sets in bright leather bindings.

"These ought to be in your line," he said. "You're a writing fellow, aren't you?"

Those books and the large oil-painting of a young officer in the uniform of the Seaforth Highlanders were the chief features of the room. I remembered the tale of how C had cut off his leg with a penknife in order to reach his dying son and put an overcoat over him, and the little room filled with that large portrait expressed how large a place the original must have held in his heart.

It must have been after eleven o'clock when I got up to leave.

C came along with me to the door of the flat.

"Well, you'd better look in every day while you're in London," he told me. "I thought this would happen."

"You thought what would happen, sir?"

"Why, I intended to make myself extremely unpleasant to you; but I said that when I saw you I should probably find you a man after my own heart and fall on your neck. We'll have dinner at the Savoy one night soon."

I felt, as I walked down the marble stairs of Whitehall Court, that we should get a real move on in Athens presently.

## VARIOUS INTERVIEWS

One of the first people I saw in London was the late Principal R. M. Burrows of King's College who was a great Philhellene and a devoted champion of Venizelos. At lunch Burrows told me that a most interesting man was coming to see him at half-past two whom he thought I ought to meet.

"Oh, who is that?"

"Why, he has been *The Times* correspondent up in Salonica. Watney Hyde is his name. He seems to know every corner of Greece, and he certainly has a remarkable grip of the situation out there. He told me a lot of most interesting things."

"I expect he did," I said. "Would you mind if when he calls he is shown straight in to me somewhere?"

Burrows looked rather astonished at such a request.

"Why, certainly, but . . ." he hesitated.

I told Burrows the story of Watney Hyde and the circumstances in which he had returned to England. So at half-past two Watney Hyde was shown in by the maid to the drawing-room where I was waiting for his arrival alone. His tallowy jaw dropped.

"I thought I sent you home to enlist," I said.

"I shall enlist in due course and when I think fit," Hyde retorted.

"What do you mean by masquerading round here as *The Times* correspondent at Salonica? You will enlist at once, or I shall notify the police, not to mention the Military Authori-

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ties, of your behaviour. And don't forget that in no circumstances will you be allowed to get out to Salonica as an interpreter. Now clear off, and don't let me meet you wandering around anywhere else as *Times* correspondent, or you'll find it most disagreeable."

I may as well finish the story of Watney Hyde now, although the sequel is not due until the final volume of these memories.

Soon after I returned to Athens at the beginning of November a telegram reached us from Pipon, the Intelligence Officer at Marseilles, inquiring if we knew anything about a certain Watney Hyde who had asked him for a passage to Greece and asserted that he was on a secret mission from the War Office. He added that his behaviour was suspicious. I telegraphed urgently to have Hyde arrested at once and detained. Pipon telegraphed back to say that it was too late, and that Watney Hyde had embarked on a French ship. I signalled all ports in Greece to stop him immediately if he landed, but there was no news from anywhere of Watney Hyde, and no more was heard of him until the middle of January, 1917, when Tucker came into my office in Syra to announce that Watney Hyde had just disembarked from a steamer coming from Crete.

"What do you wish done about it?" Tucker asked.

"He's to be arrested at once and brought up to me."

It was the same tallowy Watney Hyde that came into my office, and he was wearing the same St. George and the Dragon pin in his tie.

"What the blazes does this mean?" I demanded. "I thought I left you in London on the way to enlist."

"Don't you speak to me," said Hyde loftily. "I'm on a secret mission from the War Office. You have nothing whatever to do with me now."

"You've struck a very bad place here to carry out a secret mission," I told him. "In fact, you've put your head right into

a hornets' nest at Syra. Tucker, take the prisoner away and shut him up in your house until he tells us what this secret mission is with which he claims the War Office has entrusted him."

Tucker, who loved an occasion like this, stepped forward like a police-inspector and clapped a hand on Hyde's shoulder.

"Come along, my lad," he said, "this is no place for your antics."

"You'll be sorry for this, Captain Mackenzie," Hyde warned me. "This is going to involve you in an action for false imprisonment and heavy damages."

"Is it? Not while I'm in Syra. Any more nonsense from you, Hyde, and I'll have you put in irons."

"Well, if you'll accept the responsibility with the War Office," said Hyde, "I'll show you my authority."

With this he produced a torn piece of paper stamped with the lion and the unicorn like all papers in Government offices, on which was scribbled with a blue pencil 'M.I. 6'.

"What's this?"

"That's my authority from the War Office," said Watney Hyde.

I was staggered by the impudence of it.

"Take him away and lock him up," I told Tucker. "I'll settle later what's to be done with him."

Hyde was hardly out of my room when I was informed that a lady wished to speak to me on an urgent matter of business. Presently a much-agitated woman was shown in who asked me if I could do anything to recover a large sum of money which had been borrowed from her on board ship by a certain Mr. Watney Hyde to whom she had become engaged to be married. It appeared that the distracted lady was on her way out to Greece to take up a position as governess to some family in Athens, and that she had met Hyde in the French ship travelling from Mar-

seilles. I cannot remember now whether it was torpedoed or not. However, for some reason the ship had put into Ajaccio, and there Hyde had borrowed all her savings from her on the excuse that he was expecting funds for an important secret mission with which he had been entrusted by the British Government. After a long wait in Corsica they had finally travelled together on the same ship to Crete where Hyde had tried to get on board another ship and sail for Syra without her. When he did not succeed in doing this he had broken off the engagement and denied that she had ever lent him any money.

I sent word down to Tucker's house to have Hyde searched immediately; but whatever money he had had from the governess must have been spent, for he had hardly a franc on him. I told the unfortunate lady that the only thing she could do was to let her loss be a warning to her not to get engaged to gentlemen with enamelled St. George and the Dragon tie-pins who said they were on secret missions. Then I advanced her fare to Athens and sent her on in the steamer to the Piræus to take up her situation, much depressed, but I hoped with an added stock of worldly wisdom.

On making further inquiries I found that Watney Hyde without a passport or *laissez-passer* and with nothing but that torn sheet of Government foolscap had actually travelled free from London to Marseilles, and thence onward via Corsica and Crete to Syra. It was only his bad luck in getting off the boat to take a stroll on the quay at Syra which had prevented his getting safely back to Athens at the expense of the British and French Governments. The mystery of the torn sheet of foolscap on which 'M.I. 6' had been scribbled in blue pencil, and the offer of which whenever he was asked for his passport or ticket had waved him magically onward, was easily solved. He had planned, as I knew he would, to get out to Salonica as an interpreter. So he had gone round to the War Office and inquired

what was the proper department to which he should apply. M.I. 6 was the department of Military Intelligence which dealt with interpreters. Somebody in the War Office must have told him that M.I. 6 was where he ought to go. Hyde would have asked for the initials and number to be repeated, and the informant would have hastily scrawled 'M.I. 6' on a piece of paper. With this precious document in his possession Hyde had conceived the bold idea of travelling back to Greece gratis. He had left Waterloo with this, travelling free on the railway to Southampton. He had bluffed the Passport Control of M.I. 5 at Southampton and been sent on to Havre. At Havre he had secured a free trip on the train down to Marseilles, and it was not until he asked Pipon for a passage to Greece that he was suspected. He had then gone to the French authorities, and by the time our warning telegram had reached Pipon he had already embarked at the French Government's expense.

I kept Watney Hyde jailed at Syra until there was a ship sailing for Malta. Then I sent him off with the request that he should be sent on from there to London and put in a Labour battalion as quickly as possible.

A week or two later I received a telegram from M.I. 5 asking me not to send any more men like Watney Hyde back to England as they had no machinery for dealing with them there, and the Home Office rules were very strict.

Had I known then that Sir Basil Thomson was one day going to claim so much authoritative knowledge of Greek affairs during the War, I should have suggested a consultation with him, but I merely asked what machinery they supposed we had in Greece for dealing with such men.

After promising me so much from Watney Hyde's information about Greece, Burrows was put on his mettle, and suggested that I should have an interview with Sir Edward Carson who



had resigned from the Cabinet over the Salonica muddle in October, 1915. Burrows told me that he was now inclined to interest himself in the Greek question. I said that before seeing Sir Edward Carson I thought I ought to wait until Lord Hardinge sent for me, but after waiting for some time C told me definitely that Lord Hardinge did not wish to see me. After that I no longer had any hesitation about putting the state of affairs in Greece before Sir Edward Carson. Burrows took me along to the Law Courts where we found Sir Edward Carson in a dark little room, his wig lying on the table beside him. His large swarthy face looked larger and swarthier for the dimness and dinginess of the surroundings. A sombre and impressive figure he seemed, as he sat there nursing a knee and listening to my appreciation of Greek affairs.

"Well," he said in the end, "I might overthrow the Government over this if matters grow worse in Greece."

He mentioned the number of members who were ready to vote with him when the time came. I am under the impression that it was one hundred and fifty-three, the number of the miraculous draught of fishes.

"But, Sir Edward," I went on, "the situation may develop rapidly at any moment. The lives of Allied subjects in Athens, not to mention the lives of Venizelist Greeks, may be in danger while they are waiting for you to overthrow the Government at home. Of course, nothing may happen at all, but the Royalists believe that Venizelos is planning an anti-dynastic movement, and they believe that the British Government will not support him. That being the case, they are likely to anticipate any offensive action on the part of Venizelists who have joined the Provisional Government by plunging Greece into civil war. If civil war once breaks out, anything may happen as you'll agree. What is required is a positive assurance that the British Government will support Venizelos. The moment that is made

clear you may be sure we shall hear no more talk of Royalist violence."

"Well," said Sir Edward Carson, "if you find the situation becoming graver you can communicate with me through Professor Burrows, and I shall probably decide to act."

I mentioned that Lord Denman, whom I had seen again in London, was always ready to ask a question in the House of Lords, and that since he had first-hand experience of the state of affairs in Athens he was in a position to make his question a searching one.

We talked a little more about the muddle last October which had led to the overwhelming of Serbia, and for that Sir Edward Carson blamed Lord Kitchener. I remember that he told us a story of a Cabinet meeting at which the dispatch of troops for the Suvla landing was being debated before Lord Kitchener had arrived. When he took his place some member of the Cabinet had suggested that perhaps Mr. Secretary of State for War could indicate to the Cabinet his opinion whether the projected new landing was likely to be successful or not. To this Lord Kitchener had snapped:

"How do I know whether it will be successful or not? I've never been there."

Perhaps if the disastrous events of the First of December in Athens had happened a fortnight earlier Sir Edward Carson would have succeeded in overthrowing the Government without those tortuous negotiations which Lord Beaverbrook relates so vividly in the second volume of *Politicians and the War*.

My next interview was with Mr. Gennadius at the Greek Legation in De Vere Gardens. I was able to tell him why he had been completely ignored by Prince Andrew during the latter's diplomatic visit to London, and he was half amused, half annoyed to hear that he was supposed to have handed over the Greek cipher to the Foreign Office. He was of course already well aware that

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the great obstacle to the progress of Mr. Venizelos was a general belief that the British Government disapproved of his adventure; but he was perturbed to hear from me how really dangerous the situation was likely to become for friends and supporters of Mr. Venizelos in Athens unless the rumour of British opposition to his policy could be dispelled. I held firmly to my opinion that the King and Venizelos were irreconcilable, and begged him not to put his faith in such a possibility for a moment.

After that we talked about books, and he showed me some of his treasures. A pleasant memory.

### MORE ABOUT CONTROLS

The problem of the future of Venizelos will have to be laid aside for a moment in order to deal with the problem of the future of the Military Control Office.

In the middle of October a telegram came from Athens to say that the French Admiral had demanded the surrender of the whole of the Greek Fleet; the disarmament of the forts dominating the Piræus and Salamis; French control of the Piræus and Larissa railway; French control of the Police; and French control of the port of Piræus. The Greek Government had accepted all these demands, and the crews had evacuated the warships immediately. I advised C that the only counter-offensive which could be taken was immediately to institute port control of Patras and Calamata, for at this rate it looked as if the French were going to block our own proposed control of the Peloponnese. Remembering, too, de Roquefeuil's objection to our having a representative at Chalcis, I was anxious to test the cordiality of the Entente by demanding a representative there.

On October 18th I drafted a telegram for C which he sent to Plunkett in Athens:

## OCTOBER

*Suggest sending immediately Q. to Patras and J. to Calamata as Port Officers. Ask Minister to endorse former's position with Consul. There must be no interference at present with Italian ships, but tell the Minister in confidence that we expect to control them shortly. Proposed agents for the Peloponnese and Missolonghi can now be got going gradually. W. H. must insist on maintaining a representative at Chalcis whatever the French say.*

*Following for Naval Attaché :*

*Please work hard to persuade de Roquefeuil to co-operate cordially in Patras with our new Port Officer there in preventing anybody's leaving Greece without Anglo-French control visa.*

It will be evident from the above telegram that by now C was wholeheartedly with us in the effort to hold our position in Greece. I had outlined to him my scheme for a check on contraband going northward from Greece to the enemy by establishing posts between Janina and Volo, and I had explained the importance of these outposts as a check to Royalist intrigue. This proposal of mine was to be brought up at an Intelligence conference to be held shortly.

On the morning of the conference, a drenching October day, C said to me:

"Look here, Mackenzie, if you want the money for those places of yours with unpronounceable names, you'd better go out and buy a half-crown map of Greece from Bartholomew's and mark each place with crosses before you start arguing what you want."

So out I went, and by a coincidence whom should I meet but George Leith, who had left the British Naval Mission in Greece and was shortly going to take up a command in the Grand Fleet as a flotilla leader of destroyers in the North Sea.

We stood in the pouring rain talking about Athens for a while, and that is the last time I was to meet one who did much

to enliven odd hours in Athens during 1915 and 1916. After parting with George Leith I went on to secure my map, which I marked with crosses in red pencil. I had taken care not to buy too big a map, for I wanted the crosses to look as much like the great wall of China as possible.

The conference began, various generals and colonels being seated round a table in the War Office as I remember. Presently one of my sponsors said:

"Captain Mackenzie has a proposal to make, General, and he has brought a map to show exactly what he requires."

There was a murmur of satisfaction when the generals and colonels heard that a map was available, and there was almost a buzz of excitement when they leant over and saw my red crosses presenting an apparently impenetrable barrier from sea to sea against the most intrepid and resourceful contrabandist.

"I see he's got it right across Greece," said one general. "That should be very effective. And how much do you think this scheme of yours will cost, Captain Mackenzie?"

My original request had been for something under six hundred pounds, but seeing the enthusiasm these crosses had aroused, like Harry Tate selling a car to what he fancies is a promising purchaser I replied at once:

"I think I ought to be able to do it for twelve hundred pounds a month, sir."

"That sounds very moderate," said another general. "Don't you think you'd want rather more than that?"

"Well," I replied judiciously, "no doubt with the gradual extension of our control it would be as well if I knew I could call on two thousand a month, though of course I do not anticipate that we should spend all that on this northern chain. I am hoping to make the Peloponnese completely secure also."

In order to make the Peloponnese secure on paper I had drawn a red line right round it, and not even during the most

favourable moments of the Lacedæmonian War can Sparta ever have looked so secure as it looked on that map of mine guarded by a pencilled ring.

I believe it was that morning at the War Office that some junior member of the Intelligence asked me if Sir Francis Elliot was off his head.

"Off his head?" I repeated. "Far from it. He is probably one of the keenest diplomats you will find anywhere."

"Really? How extraordinary! I know there's a general impression in the War Office that he's quite off his head. I heard he sent a most extraordinary telegram the other day, something about 'God damn it' or 'God blast it all', I can't remember exactly what the expression was, but I know they thought it was a most extraordinary sort of telegram for a diplomatic fellow to send."

I suddenly recollected the telegram Sir Francis had sent in answer to the reminder by the Foreign Office that War Office principles of seniority must be maintained, in which Sir Francis had invoked the Deity's aid if the future of the country was to depend on those principles.

One afternoon at Whitehall Court I went into C's room and found a cheerful young man with him to whom I was introduced. This was Wiseman,\* who was running C's show in New York and just leaving again for America. I remember his showing us a photograph from the *Tatler* or some such paper of the German Ambassador at Washington in a bathing-dress with two ladies also in bathing-dresses.

"This is going badly against him in New York," Wiseman said with a chuckle.

I reflected that only in Great Britain or the United States could such a photograph have been expected to influence public opinion against the war aims of Germany, and for a moment I

\* Sir William Wiseman, Bt., C.B.

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was depressed by the civilization we were fighting such a great war to preserve.

### NEW OFFICERS

C had promised me all the new officers he could get hold of in order to extend our scheme of port control wherever an opportunity of development occurred, and after meeting Edward Knoblock at some party I suggested that he should come out to Athens. Knoblock at that time was working in a private capacity with the Indian Secret Intelligence, which was mysteriously housed somewhere near Sloane Street. I have an idea that Somerset Maugham was also engaged in that branch of secret activity. Knoblock wanted a commission, and I thought I could promise him a lieutenancy in the R.N.V.R. C agreed, but no sooner had Knoblock hurriedly set about procuring a naval uniform than it was discovered that he could not be a lieutenant in the R.N.V.R. because he was still an American subject.

"However," said C, "I believe we can get him a commission in the R.N.A.S."

So Knoblock dashed out and bought a woollen bird to sew on his naval uniform. No sooner had he equipped himself as a naval airman than he was told he might have to be a Second Lieutenant in General Service.

So Knoblock rushed out again from those wonderful Regency rooms of his in Albany and equipped himself with a khaki uniform and the green tabs of an Intelligence Officer.

As we were due to leave England on November 3rd and as Knoblock's commission could not possibly be gazetted until long after that, we decided it would be safest to take all three uniforms out to Greece, and possibly dispose out there of the superfluous equipment when it was settled which service he was to join. In his enthusiasm he even bought two swords, a naval and a military one.

Two or three days before we were to leave London C announced that he had unearthed another officer for me who spoke modern Greek and to whom if I approved of him would be granted that commission in the R.N.V.R. which had eluded Knoblock.

Picktor was a somewhat gawky and extremely self-conscious young man, trembling with earnestness and completely devoid of humour. He had been born and educated in England; but his father had been a naturalized subject, and the consciousness of this gave him what I suppose must be called an inferiority complex, though it sounds the wrong phrase for the awkward aggressiveness with which Picktor was wont to express it. His most noticeable characteristic was his voice, which sounded as if it was being constricted inside his throat by the vocal cords. He did not know much modern Greek; but he was full of high resolve, and he had been studying it with a teacher in the hope of getting out to Greece during the War.

Picktor was to be one of my crosses during the next few months; but when I interviewed him in C's room in Whitehall Court he seemed an enthusiastic young man pathetically anxious to be doing something in the War. Although my better judgment warned me that he would probably be more of a nuisance than a help, I had not the heart to tell C I would not take him.

I naturally did not forget Tucker's longing for the executive curl when commissions were being discussed, and before I left London I was able to secure his commission as Lieutenant R.N.V.R. instead of Assistant-Paymaster R.N.V.R.

The promotion of Robertson to Corporal in the Army Service Corps was more difficult. However, in the end this tremendous step was achieved as an honorary rank. In other words he was to be allowed to call himself Corporal, but he was not to get any extra pay.



## CHAPTER XI: NOVEMBER

### LONDON TO PARIS

ON November 2nd, the day before we were to leave for Greece, C presented me with the swordstick he had always carried himself on spying expeditions in the time of peace.

"That's when this business was really amusing," he said. "After the War is over we'll do some amusing secret service work together. It's capital sport."

Word had been sent from the Foreign Office that I was to carry some bags for them to Rome and Athens. I went round on a murky November evening to get my way-bill. Downing Street and Whitehall seemed appropriately wreathed in a frore fog. It was pleasant to think that I should soon be back beneath the blue skies of Hellas. Little did I dream at that moment that I was at the beginning of the most adventurous and exciting few weeks of my life.

The Foreign Office itself was apparently empty except for cleaners and one old janitor who was not at all inclined to believe that it would be possible for me to have the bags until to-morrow morning. However, in the end a clerk was dug out of some unimaginable room, and I received my way-bill. The two bags for Rome were enormous affairs, both uncrossed. They probably contained clothing and toilet articles for various members at the Embassy. The bag for Greece was very small, but what it lacked in size it made up for in weight. There seemed to be enough lead inside it to cover a roof. It was crossed, and I had been given to understand that it contained an extremely confidential dispatch for Mr. Venizelos.

We left by the two o'clock train from Charing Cross. A picture comes back to me of arriving at the station just as wounded men were being brought out on stretchers and put into ambulances that were waiting in the station-yard and of a group of girls throwing bunches of chrysanthemums into the ambulances as they drove off. I do not know if this was a regular manifestation of the hero worship which in times of peace is transferred to the stage-door, or if it was a particular occasion.

Picktor had brought his fiancée to see him off, and there was an atmosphere of priggishness perceptible.

"We shall have trouble with this young man on the journey," Knoblock observed. "It looks to me as if he's going to be thoroughly tiresome."

I said I thought he was just feeling shy and somewhat overcome by the unknown that was stretching out ahead of him; but even before we reached Folkestone I knew that Knoblock was right, and I blessed the good luck which had provided Knoblock as a companion for myself and an extra wet nurse for this young man on the way out to Athens.

There was no chance of studying the passport arrangements at Folkestone because everybody was so anxious to speed us on that we were tucked away on board in a deck cabin before we knew where we were. It was encouraging to find so much goodwill in one's colleagues, and I was grateful for their cordially expressed appreciation of what we were doing in Athens.

At Boulogne, which we did not reach until after dark, we found that the train was about a mile from the boat and separated from it by an overflow of mud from Flanders. We could not get hold of a porter, and when at last Knoblock and I reached the train after dragging the bags and some of our luggage through that infernal mud, we found that no compartment had been reserved for the Messenger. The train was already

crowded, and whatever happened to the rest of the luggage the bags had to go with me. Finally, in the forefront of the train we found an empty first-class compartment and I settled down inside with the bags while Knoblock, who with his feet on French soil was getting more Napoleonic every moment, went hurrying back through the mud to fetch Picktor and the rest of the luggage. While he was gone a French official put his head round the door of the carriage to say that the whole of this part of the train was reserved for Mr. Pierpont Morgan, and that the particular compartment I occupied was reserved for Mr. Pierpont Morgan's valet. I told him that I was a *courrier du roi* and that if Mr. Pierpont Morgan's valet tried to get into this carriage I should push him out into the mud, and Mr. Pierpont Morgan as well, unless another compartment were found for me. The official retired, and presently Knoblock arrived with the rest of the luggage. Heaven knows how he ever found a man and a barrow to get it there. Probably in the Napoleonic mood he was in he was mistaken by the French officials for Mr. Pierpont Morgan himself. When presently two officials came along to renew the argument about our right to occupy the compartment we had by this time filled with luggage Knoblock, whose French was as fluent as my own, joined in, and by the time we had finished with Mr. Pierpont Morgan there was hardly an unused opprobrious epithet left in the French dictionary.

The French officials retired discomfited by the vigour of the duet and we settled back into our corners. Knoblock asked where Picktor was.

"I told him to wait with the luggage."

"He wasn't there when I went back."

"Well, we can't bother any more about him," I said impatiently. "If he turns up he turns up, and if he doesn't he stays here in Boulogne."

Knoblock, however, wanted something more to be Napoleonic about. So he dived out of the carriage again in order to round up our missing companion, and after a long search found him mooning about, a mile or so away from the train.

We spent all night in the train, and in the morning went to the 'Travellers' Club in Paris for breakfast, where I remember being shown the silver bath which the members had inherited from the famous courtesan whose former house was now the Club premises. Our own ablutions were made in less precious but more comfortable baths.

Knoblock had a flat in Paris overlooking the garden of the Palais Royale and furnished as delightfully as every place that Knoblock furnishes. It was pleasant to sit by the window of a small room covered with a Chinese wallpaper and watch the nurses and nursemaids with their perambulators pacing up and down the garden paths, and the old gentlemen reading their books and papers in the mild weather of St. Martin's little summer.

We dined that night at the restaurant in the Gare de Lyon, and I thought how many times I had dined here, with one eye on the big clock, on the way to Italy by this very train, the time of whose departure at 8.25 not even war had changed. We were relieved to find Picktor waiting safely on the platform, for he had gone off alone to spend the day riding about Paris on omnibuses. It was a relief, too, to hear that he had greatly enjoyed himself.

"I've had a most awfully romantic day," he told us. "It's simply wonderful to see names like the Bastille on the list of bus fares."

#### PARIS TO ROME AND TARANTO

Picktor did not want to travel in a sleeping-compartment. So Knoblock and I had a wagon-lit to ourselves, and I was

thankful to put that heavy crossed bag under my pillow and sleep.

At Modane, the frontier station, everything at this date was in a state of vile confusion. There were no blue-tabbed British Railway Transport Officers attached to the various Italian stations as they were later on, and the local officials as always in Latin countries were determined to wring the last drops of sweetness from the enjoyment of petty authority. I told Knoblock to go and collar a wagon-lit and Picktor to stay on guard over the luggage while I dealt with my passport. There was hardly room in the office for the quill-driving dignitaries to twirl their moustaches, and the space was congested with a wretched mob of dejected and impoverished peasants who were being bullied by Jacks-in-office. After a harassing half-hour wedged among this mob, the overweighted bag in one hand, the passport in the other, I managed to persuade the officials that I was travelling with dispatches and at last got through to the Italian side of the platform. Knoblock had secured a wagon-lit; and I sent him now to fight his way through the passport mob; but when I went to look for Picktor and the luggage I could see no sign of either on the platform or in the train. At last I found him mooning about in the street outside and gazing at the Alpine landscape. I asked him where the hell the luggage was, and he told me he had left it on the platform.

"I was anxious to examine the view," he said loftily. "This is the first occasion on which I have seen the Alps."

This tourist attitude was too much for me, and I exploded.

"You bloody young fool, can't you understand that you're not off to Margate for the holidays, and that when I tell you to look after luggage I mean you to look after it. Now cut along and get your passport checked as quickly as you can. We shall miss the train if you behave like this."

I then chased all over the station, still carrying that leaden

bag, but not a sign of the luggage could I discover. At last to my relief I saw Knoblock emerging from the passport office, and I told him to make a fuss in French on the French side while I fussed in Italian on the Italian side.

In the end we found the whole of our luggage locked up in a remote coal-shed just as the various Italian railway officials were coming out in their gold-laced caps to speed the train on its way South. I buttonholed the station-master, and the train was held up while the luggage was extracted from the shed and put on board.

I sank back exhausted as the train puffed out of the station, but soon recovered under the influence of Knoblock's perpetually diverting conversation. We had been chatting for about an hour when Picktor came along in the corridor and tapped on the door of the wagon-lit. We pushed it back and invited him to join us; but he presented me with a note, and instantly retired again.

I looked at the note, which was addressed to 'Captain Compton Mackenzie,' read it, and passed it on to Knoblock.

"*Dear Captain Mackenzie,*" Knoblock read out, with a marvellous imitation of Picktor's curiously constricted voice. "*I feel that you regret having brought me with you, and so I should like to resign my commission and return to England at the earliest possible moment.*"

I walked along the corridor, and found Picktor looking out of a window.

"Look here, my dear boy," I expostulated, "you really mustn't write me silly notes like this. You can't resign your commission in wartime, and if by disobeying orders the luggage is lost, you'll really have to get used to being called a bloody fool. Now come along and sit with us and forget all about this slight to your youthful vanity."

However, Picktor would not join us, because, he said, our

conversation oppressed him by its frivolity. Presumably this was because Knoblock and I had been talking about various mutual friends on the stage, or perhaps because Knoblock had invented what he called the Gaga Waltz to be danced to the strains of Sibelius's Valse Triste, the object of every dancer in which was to look more gaga than the other dancers. Knoblock had given an imitation of the way he had danced it himself, and his utter abandonment to the gaga had caused Picktor to eye him with an expression in which censoriousness strove with embarrassment.

We were kept two or three days in Rome waiting for news of a passage from Taranto to Greece. I told Picktor to see all he could manage to see in the time, but to make sure of being in good time for the crowded train by which we should leave for Taranto in the evening.

I forget at which hotel Knoblock and I stayed, but I remember that I was awakened on a topaz-bright November morning by the chattering of multitudinous swallows gathering for their voyage across the Mediterranean. I made several journeys through Rome in wartime, and it is difficult to disentangle the various incidents; but I think it was now that I first met Ivor Novello who with Phyllis Neilson-Terry had been in Sicily making a film of a book by Robert Hichens, and if so it was one evening on this journey that I heard Phyllis Neilson-Terry recite in the grand tragedy-queen manner a poem about Verdun, the refrain of which was 'They shall not pass!'

When we reached the station to leave for Taranto I warned Picktor to take a berth in a wagon-lit, because the ordinary first-class carriages would all be crammed with people travelling with free passes. But he said he preferred to travel less luxuriously, and I did not press the point. About two minutes before the train started Knoblock and I heard a clamour on the platform and presently about half a dozen excited Italian officials rushed

at us to ask if we were responsible for an English officer who was sitting in the front part of the train bound for Naples with a ticket to Taranto. The description answered to Picktor and I told the officials to put him in the right part of the train.

"*Ma non vuole, signor capitano.* We have already explained to him that he is in one of the carriages going to Naples, but he refuses to move. *È ostinato assai.*"

Out I jumped and hurried the whole length of the platform to find Picktor near the engine in the corner of a first-class carriage marked 'Napoli'.

"Look here, Picktor," I began to protest; but he interrupted me with a lordly gesture.

"I understand perfectly what these Italians are trying to do. They're trying to get me out of my seat because I refused to bribe them."

"You obstinate idiot! Don't you understand that you are in the Naples part of the train?"

"Yes, I know that is the excuse they've been making to extract money from me, but I refuse to change my seat. I've taken an intense dislike to these Italians."

The officials looked at me and shrugged their shoulders in despair.

"What did we tell you? He refuses absolutely to remove himself, and the train is already a minute late in starting."

I apologized for Picktor's imbecility in honeyed Italian; but to Picktor I spoke without honey in English, and at last I succeeded in extricating him. Just as the train was starting we saw him being bundled into a carriage at the rear and bits of luggage being tossed into the compartment after him by various porters and officials.

"I hope he'll have to stand up all night," I said viciously to Knoblock.



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### TARANTO TO ATHENS

When we reached Taranto next morning it was even wetter than it had been when I passed through on my way up. I made inquiries about the whereabouts of the *Fauvette*, a small French dispatch-boat, which was supposed to leave to-day for Keratsini, calling at Corfu on the way; but as nobody seemed to know anything about her, I thought the wisest move for me was to reach the *Queen* somehow, and inquire what chance there was of a passage to Greece. We found on the quayside what looked like a strategic position for the luggage under a corrugated-iron shed. There I left Knoblock and Picktor on guard out of the drenching rain, and succeeded in persuading a naval pinnace to take me out to the *Queen*. Admiral Kerr was as ever full of hospitality, and when he heard that I had got Knoblock and Picktor with me he at once invited them to lunch. I was going off to fetch them myself, when Alec Winter said there was no point in my getting any wetter and suggested sending a Marine to shepherd my two companions and the luggage across to the *Queen*.

By lunch time neither of them had turned up, and the Marine had not returned with any news of them. However, in the excitement of meeting various survivors of the *Persia*, among them Lancelot Lowther, the story of whose last moments in the torpedoed liner I have already related,\* I did not fuss about my companions. After lunch it was discovered that a French destroyer was sailing direct to the Piræus, the captain of which, when asked if he would give me a passage, immediately sent a cordial invitation to sail with him, regretting, however, that there would be no room for my companions, who would have to make the slow voyage in the *Fauvette*.

Meanwhile, as there was still no news of Knoblock or Picktor, another Marine was sent off to search for them. He had only

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 150.

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just left when Knoblock came alongside. He was looking ruffled ; but he was still Napoleonic, and having succeeded in hiring a fishing-boat he had somehow managed to thwart the strict harbour regulations. He was inclined to be incredulous at first when I told him we had sent a Marine to find him at ten o'clock that morning, for by now it was half-past two. Luckily I had Alec Winter to testify to my good intentions. The Marine had still not appeared, so Winter suggested asking the Commander if one of the *Queen's* boats could fetch Picktor and the luggage. The Commander was kind and Knoblock went off in the boat. When they reached the shed they found it had collapsed in the interval, and Knoblock had a hard job to persuade Picktor that he had not been deliberately left there in order that he might be crushed by the fall of the corrugated-iron roof, and thus relieve me of his unwanted company.

I had no opportunity to soothe Picktor's feelings, because I had to hurry across with my luggage to the French destroyer; but I remember that just as I was leaving the *Queen* a much-agitated Marine came up to report that he had been walking about Taranto for several hours, trying without success to find the shed with the luggage and the two officers he had been sent to fetch.

I cannot remember when the destroyer sailed; but the captain was a most delightful man, exactly like the White Knight in appearance, a most appropriate personality to wind up an Alice-through-the-Looking-glass day.

When we were about ten miles out of Taranto I saw a mine floating past us on the port side hardly a couple of yards away from the ship's side. I shouted a warning. Everybody got much excited, and it was agreed that the mine must be destroyed. Rifles were taken out of the armoury, and the ship's officers and myself went up on the bridge to shoot at it. The destroyer had been put about so that we could get some good shooting at the

brute, which like a giant sea-urchin was now bobbing about some fifty yards to starboard. I was invited as the guest to take the first shot. I had an idea that it was usual to be farther away than we were before shooting at a mine; but not liking to disgrace my new blue uniform by betraying too acute a nautical ignorance, I blazed away and missed. After me the Captain took a shot and missed. The Lieutenant took a shot and missed. The Enseigne took a shot and missed. And then in turn every officer fired and missed. Then it was my turn again, and—if anybody ever really has nearly jumped out of his skin, I did when that mine went off. A great column of water quite two hundred feet high spouted up. All the glass on the bridge was smashed by the force of the detonation, and there descended upon us a shower of broken bits of mine. The crew started cheering and scrambling about the deck on all fours for souvenirs in the shape of old iron. I picked up a jagged piece about the size of my palm, which I still have somewhere. We all agreed that the experience had been very *rigolo*, and a signal was sent immediately to the Admiral, announcing the destruction of the unpleasant monster. After this it was considered proper to celebrate the occasion, and the bottle of red wine I drank did not go well with the motion. When I began to feel wretchedly sick, the Captain decided that I must have all my meals on deck. I could have done without any meals at all that day, but as the ship's cook had been making special dishes at the Captain's instigation I had to eat them. In the intervals of eating and being sick the Captain talked to me about Alphonse Daudet's books. His kindness will never be forgotten by his guest. I hope that in some sunny garden in the heart of France his life is placid, and that he fishes in some stream serene as his own blue eyes.

Gradually the sea-sickness passed, and by the time we were running down between Cephallonia and Ithaca I was able to contemplate the exquisite beauty of a sunset that was turning

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the grey rocks of Ithaca to amethysts. Next morning I woke up to see the embanked cliffs of the Corinth Canal gliding past. That afternoon I was back in Athens.

### ATHENS AGAIN

I reached Athens on Friday, November 10th, having been away five weeks and two days. During that time I found that Plunkett had been kept busy trying to explain to people at home the complication, size, and scope of the various activities which were centred in the Intelligence Department attached to the British Legation and that he had been holding his own as far as he could against French encroachment upon our control, particularly at the port of Piræus, where Admiral du Fournet was becoming more and more obstructive.

At our first talk he told me he had written to the D.M.I. to say that he could not serve any further useful purpose in Athens, and had assured him that I was more than competent to carry on in command of an organization which I had myself created, and with which there was not the slightest excuse for interference. He added that the whole situation in Athens had been grossly misrepresented at home.

Nobody could have behaved more generously than Plunkett behaved toward myself, and the effect of his report on the home authorities coupled with the harmonious relations established with C removed all further obstructiveness. It began to look as if for a change I should be engaged in the immediate future in fighting departmental battles with the French over Controls and that the long and exasperating struggle with my own people at home was at last definitely over. Plunkett's report carried particular force because in making it he threw himself out of a post which might be considered safe for a C.M.G., and because he could not be accused of being swayed by what was believed to be my basilisk fascination.

De Roquefeuil had already left for Paris by the time I returned, and I felt pretty sure that he intended to come back with enhanced prestige and perhaps plenipotentiary powers. It would be necessary to think out a way of checking his ambition without destroying the cordial relations which existed between the British and French Services in Athens. Let me add that by ambition I do not mean personal aggrandisement, but the consummation of his plan to make Greece the half-way house to a French domination of the Levant.

Satisfactory though I found the prospects for the future of our organization, the political situation was the reverse. Ricaud's greeting to me on arrival was to ask if I had heard of the King's change of heart toward the French.

"It is marvellous," he exclaimed. "*Constantin a été très très gentil pour nous.*"

Those are the very words he used, for the sentence stamped itself on my brain, so utterly was I amazed by his announcement. It must be remembered that contrary to Sir Francis Elliot's request Lord Hardinge had not sent for me in London, so that I was completely ignorant of what had been going on behind the scenes in Athens while I was in London and I had not yet had an opportunity of seeing Sir Francis Elliot when Ricaud exploded this bomb.

"The King has been behaving very decently to you, has he?" I repeated. "What is his attitude then toward Venizelos and the Provisional Government?"

"Ah, Venizelos! We are quite tired of Venizelos. He can do nothing for himself. But since M. Bénazet has seen Constantin the situation is quite changed."

I was then given the story of the miraculous conversion of the King.

M. Bénazet, a deputy of the French Chamber, had been sent out to Salonica to inspect the sanitary arrangements there as one

of the *rapporteurs* of the War Budget. As he was to return to France by way of Athens, he had suggested that he should ask an audience of the King and try to smooth matters over in order that M. Guillemin, the French Minister, might once more be received at Court. Bénazet was evidently a debonair young man and well seen in French society, for he had been able to persuade both Admiral Dartige du Fournet, always a most ingenuous snob, and M. Guillemin to second his suggestion. Briand had telegraphed his authorization, and the King had granted the audience. Bénazet had managed to persuade the King that contrary to his belief the French gentleman did still exist. Excited by this discovery, the King had had a heart-to-heart talk with this amateur diplomat as a result of which the persuasive deputy had been able to telegraph to the Quai d'Orsay that the King of his own accord had suggested a practical test of his goodwill.

"Why don't you ask me to give you the mountain batteries that you so badly want?" His Majesty had suggested.

Never had I been able to quote with such exquisite appropriateness '*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*'.

"No, no," Ricaud protested, "there is no trick. Constantin has seen that it is time to cease his behaviour toward France."

"And are you going to ask for these guns?" I said.

"*Bien sûr que nous les demanderons!*" The King agreed too with M. Bénazet to surrender the light flotilla of the Greeks and that we should occupy the Arsenal at Salamis. Naturally, he made the condition that the ships were not to be given to Venizelos, and for which M. Venizelos thinks he has a grievance."

"I'm not surprised," I said, "for I confess I don't quite see yet where Venizelos comes into this beautiful picture."

"Venizelos will have to be very careful, or we shall have no more to do with him."

"My god," I cried in dismay, "you can't turn round and behave like that after involving him and so many others in that Salonica adventure."

Ricaud scowled.

"We are excessively annoyed," he said, "because as soon as the Venizelists heard of the *rapprochement* between us and the King some of them came down from Salonica and attacked the Royalist outposts at Ekaterini. General Roques, our Minister for War, has had to declare a neutral zone separating the Royalist troops in the north of Thessaly from those grand troops of the Provisional Government."

This sneer at the men who had flung away everything for an ideal was too much for me. I let Ricaud have it. All my rage with the French for letting down first of all James II, then James III, then Charles Edward, and finally the Irish in 1798 was expressed in the adjectives I used for their proposal now to let Venizelos down.

"And I warn you that you will pay in blood for this *lâcheté*. You have been *roulés* by the King, and you'll find that your vanity will make you a laughing-stock when he shows his hand. Why on earth should he choose this moment to be friendly with France? He has just received positive assurances both from England and Russia that his throne and crown will be safe in any case. Do you suppose because a damned deputy talks to him for half an hour in the style of the *Société du Sport de Compiègne* that he has really been convinced of the friendship of France? Perhaps M. Bénazet persuaded him that the Duke of Orleans would shortly be invited to seat himself on the throne of the Bourbons?"

"M. de Roquefeuil thought as you think at first," Ricaud said. "Yet even he was convinced that the King has entirely changed his point of view."

"Well, it's no use arguing about it any more for the

moment," I said. "I am absolutely convinced that there is a trick somewhere, and I know you'll agree with me before many days have passed."

After this revelation that the French were prepared to let down the Provisional Government if it suited them better to establish their political and commercial supremacy in Greece with the help of King Constantine, we heard that up in Salonica the British Military Authorities were making strenuous efforts again to get into touch with the Bulgarians and persuade them to make a separate peace, of course at the expense of Greece. They proposed as their envoy a certain General Ivanoff reputed to be a Russophile Bulgarian and now in Athens. I had the satisfaction a day or two later of giving Plunkett the information that this precious mediator had left Athens for Berlin some time ago. Efforts too were being made at this time to effect a separate peace with Turkey, and I was instructed to keep my eyes open for a possible envoy.

Sir Francis Elliot was by now in rather a despondent mood. The interference of the French Admiral with everything was beginning to get on his nerves. It really was an intolerable situation for a diplomat of his experience. The Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay had found the presence of the Admiral at Salamis just what they wanted to release them from all responsibility for anything that might happen in Athens or Salonica. It was he who was to take every step in order that the Allied Ministers, the Foreign Office, and the Quai d'Orsay might plead *force majeure* for any action he took. In these circumstances Sir Francis was inclined to stand by watching sardonically the mistakes of a man of action. Being still hopeful of that elusive reconciliation between the King and Mr. Venizelos, he did not share my pessimism about the possible results of M. Bénazet's amateur diplomacy, and of course at this date there was actually no direct threat to the security of the position



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by a formal demand for the surrender of the arms. The whole business was still under discussion. However, I was able to stir up his indignation over the way the French were proposing to establish complete command over the controls, and I asked his permission to put forward counter-proposals.

### THE ENEMY LEGATIONS

My next discussion was with Sells, who agreed with all my ideas and promised to back them up. I found out from him that German submarine activity in the Mediterranean was increasing steadily while the Fleet was lying idle at Salamis, and I suggested that if we could secure the expulsion of the enemy Legations and all enemy Consuls throughout Greece we should at least break up their submarine Intelligence, and what was more important strike a really serious blow at the growing confidence among the Germanophile Greeks that we were ready to betray the Venizelists. We sent in some strong representations on the subject, and finally Sir Francis told the French Admiral that in view of the powers he had been granted it was his business to demand the expulsion of the enemy Ministers and the staffs of the enemy Legations. To this the Admiral replied that he had no evidence whatever that any of the staff of the enemy Legations had ever indulged in hostile activities whether of espionage or on behalf of submarines. He added with that cocksure and complacent scepticism which he mistook for the wisdom of experience that when Sir Francis could produce documentary evidence against any two members of the enemy diplomatic corps he would act.

"There's a good job for you, Mackenzie," said Sir Francis. "We want evidence as soon as possible in the handwriting of two enemy diplomats that they are exceeding their official activities."

I felt as hopeless as somebody in a fairy story who has been set an impossible task like spinning flax into gold.

Tucker was so much elated by the present I had been able to bring him back from London of his commission as a lieutenant that with the golden executive curl adorning his sleeve he felt nothing was impossible.

"As a matter of fact, Captain Z," he told me, "I believe I've got the very man for Grancy."

The man in question proved to be a representative of one of the old Venetian families of Naxos that once upon a time were so powerful in the Ægean, but are now in decay. He was a—well, let him be called a Sanudo, and he still showed signs of the ancient aristocratic line from which he was sprung. He reminded me of southern Italians I had known, small-town nobodies, yet the bearers of names that were historic two centuries before the first Norman set foot upon the beach at Pevensey. Sanudo could not be treated like an ordinary agent. He had to be handled with an exaggerated courtesy and a perpetual recognition of his breeding. I entrusted Knoblock with the task of interviewing him. No light task, for Sanudo loved the sound of his own voice.

Knoblock and Picktor had reached Athens four or five days after myself. They had had a miserably uncomfortable journey in the *Fauvette*, which had been so crowded that there had been no room even to sit down. One of the joys of Knoblock's company was his consistent ability to produce a good story out of the most trying conditions, and of course he had a story about Picktor.

"Do you know how I keep cheerful, Knoblock?" he had asked when they were jammed together in the crowd on the deck of the *Fauvette* as she rolled along from Corfu to Patras.

"I have an infallible way of cheering myself up, Knoblock," he had continued. "I simply continue to say to myself, 'Cheep, cheep! Cheep, cheep!' Try it, Knoblock. Try saying 'Cheep,

cheep!' to yourself. You'll find that you'll soon forget all about the discomfort of your surroundings."

One asks if the author of that optimistic song, *I hold up my finger and I say Tweet-tweet*, ever met Picktor in uncomfortable surroundings.

Picktor himself had been given a job in the passport office, and even the always sympathetic, ever kind Miss Cook was driven to observe that he was rather an ass.

To return to Sanudo. He was already in touch with the German Marine Attaché, and Grancy had promised him that if he could obtain a visa for Egypt he would finance his espionage. Remembering a way of getting information out of Turkey by writing on eggs, I suggested that Sanudo should suggest to Grancy an attempt to export eggs and information simultaneously from Egypt. Grancy thought this a promising scheme and actually gave Sanudo two thousand drachmas down on account of his expenses. I took a thousand of them for our own office expenses and let Sanudo keep the rest. Then I telegraphed to Alexandria that we were proposing to send Sanudo to Egypt and asked them to facilitate the supply of false information. A frightened telegram replied that the idea of letting an enemy agent into Egypt was not to be thought of. Plunkett, who had not yet left Athens, was able to calm them down, and as Sanudo declared he did not want any reward except a British passport, I was able to provide this for him without consulting anybody in Egypt.

"But," I warned him, "you must get a questionnaire from the German Marine Attaché in his own handwriting. Otherwise the passport will be taken away from you, and we shall have no further need of your services."

Sanudo gazed at me from his lustrous brown eyes and assured me that I was demanding from him an achievement of indescribable difficulty, but added that he hoped the memory of his

ancestors would give him the necessary aplomb to do what I wanted. It did. On November 16th, he was able to tell Knoblock that he expected to have Grancy's questionnaire on the morning of Saturday, the 18th.

On the day before this, while I was wondering at my desk where on earth we were going to find documentary evidence against another diplomat even if Sanudo should really succeed in producing the required evidence against Grancy, Zanardi came in to say that while he had been walking along Stadium Street a few minutes ago he had seen sitting at a typewriter in a public typewriting bureau a man whose actions were highly suspicious.

"In what way suspicious?"

"Well, he had a piece of paper beside him, and he was typing with great caution from this piece of paper, looking always over his shoulder to see that no one is watching him."

I should explain that in Athens it was possible to hire a typewriter for an hour or so as one might hire a bicycle, and that people using typewriters thus often sat working in full view of passers-by in the street.

"So, I have to ask your permission, Captain Mackenzie," Zanardi went on, "for me to go in and snatch away from him all his papers and what he now types. I am sure he is making suspicious matters."

"I really don't think you can do that, Zanardi," I objected. "The Press will get hold of it and turn it into another outrage by the Anglo-French police. The fellow's probably only typing out a love-letter."

"No, no," Zanardi insisted, "I am sure he is making espionage. Please to let me go and snatch the paper from him. I am sure it is something we must have. Everybody is becoming very impudent in Athens since you have been away. You had told us that we must do nothing while Colonel Plunkett is here, because it would make things difficult for him. But now I

think we must begin to show that we cannot sit still while they laugh at us."

"Very well, Zanardi," I assented at last, "go and snatch the papers away if you like; but if there's a row don't expect any support from me, for I shall say that you acted entirely without my knowledge and against my orders."

Zanardi waited for no more, but set off at once like an excited schoolboy. Ten minutes later he laid out on my desk a long questionnaire in the handwriting of the Turkish Military Attaché, Mumtaz Bey, together with all the papers, ciphers, communications, and proposed contacts of a Turkish spy. Not content with that he had frightened the spy himself into following him to the Annexe, whence he would be sent off to Malta at the first opportunity. Much has been made by writers on the other side of the kidnapping and arrests of Greeks by the 'Anglo-French Secret Police.' The impression conveyed is that some hundreds of innocent people were eliminated from Athens. Actually only twenty Greek and enemy suspects were sent away to Malta during 1916, and I was instrumental in obtaining the release of over forty Greeks who had been arrested by the Naval or Military Authorities during 1915 and 1916. So the balance is in our favour.

The day after the capture of the Turkish spy, Sanudo handed over to me two long questionnaires about Abyssinia \* written in pencil by the German Marine Attaché himself. Within a few days of the French Admiral's demand to perform what seemed an impossible task, luck like a fairy godmother performed it for us. Sir Francis Elliot was pleased, not so much perhaps by the prospect of ejecting the enemy Legations from Athens as of scoring off the French Admiral. A meeting of Allied Ministers was convened. Admiral Dartige du Fournet was invited to attend, and having himself named the conditions he had no

\* Which German agents were finding fertile ground for anti-British propaganda.

alternative but to honour the obligation. He observed wryly that he saw no use in the expulsion apart from certain journalistic advantages.

On November 18th Sir Francis Elliot sent the following telegram to Lord Grey:

*A flagrant case of espionage by the German and another by the Turkish Legation has just been discovered by the Intelligence Service. I have regarded these as the "incident calling for immediate action" contemplated by your telegram of 13th Nov. and in conjunction with my colleagues am requesting French Admiral to expel enemy Consulates and Legations.*

*To-morrow evening the Admiral will address himself directly to those Legations calling upon them to place themselves on a ship put at their disposal by Wednesday morning. If necessary a longer term will be granted to Consular officers living at a distance: it is particularly desired that Consuls both Austrian and Turkish at Janina should go.*

*At the same time the Admiral will notify the King of Greece and the Greek Government.*

*The Admiral will at the same time consult the wishes of the enemy Legations as to whether they want to be repatriated via Marseilles or Cavalla.*

Lord Grey's reply to this was neither cordial nor congratulatory. He was worried by the precedent established and doubtful of the wisdom of the step.

On November 20th two Greek ships were sunk by enemy submarines exactly where we had been able to notify the French Admiral that they would be sunk. He had of course paid no attention to the information, and when a mild protest was conveyed to him by Sells he was reported to have complained that he had not been told the time the ships were to have been sunk. I should not give currency to such a fatuous observation, which may after all have been invented by his enemies in the

French Intelligence, if the Admiral himself in his book did not lay so much stress on his never having received any information about enemy submarines that was not worthless.

On November 22nd, the staffs of the enemy Legations embarked on the Vessel provided to take them to Cavalla. I cannot resist quoting an account of this incident as narrated by the historian Sir Basil Thomson:

“Admiral du Fournet had been pressing the Allied Ministers to allow him to expel the Ministers of the Enemy Powers, their Staffs and families from Athens, but they had never been able to agree among themselves. He won a trembling consent from them at the beginning of November. Feeling sure, from the excellent relations he had established with the Palace, that the King would not oppose him, he sent a written order to the Ministers of Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria, that they must leave Greece within forty-eight hours with the entire staff of each Legation and offering them sea transport to any place they might choose.”

Sir Basil Thomson, who is often as much muddled over his dates as over his facts, goes on to say:

“It was at this juncture that M. Bénazet, a member of the Committee of the Chamber of the French army, arrived in Athens on his way to Salonica to gather first-hand information on the state of Sarraïl's troops.”

But M. Bénazet was already back in Paris at this juncture.

“Suddenly the news reached Athens on November 23rd that the Venizelist troops in Salonica, instead of attacking the Bulgarian enemy—had crossed the southern border and attacked the King's troops at Ekaterini, the gate of Thessaly. Athens was in a ferment.”

But the Ekaterini incident had occurred on November 4th.

That Thomson should have been responsible during the War for the examination of suspected spies in England is a disquieting reflection.

## THE TRIPLE CONTROL

During the same week as the expulsion of the enemy Legations I was working hard at my scheme of triple Control. The division of Greece into spheres of influence had been accepted a month ago, and for the British sphere of influence the Peloponnese had been chosen together with all the islands in the Ægean and the Ionian Seas not already in the occupation of the French. While I had been away, the French, acting through Admiral Dartige du Fournet, had established control over all Greek railways, posts, and telegraphs.

Even the port control at the Piræus, which had been entirely built up by ourselves, was by this time at the mercy of the Admiral's whims. De Roquefeuil had gone back to France to consolidate his position, and I was now informed by Ricaud that he would presently return *plus puissant que jamais* with a large staff of officers and supreme command over all controls. It was clear that unless I could change the situation by tact we were faced by what would amount to a French occupation of Greece. This might mean the end of Venizelos, for if the King decided to make peace with the French in order to destroy him there was little doubt but that the French would abandon Venizelos and his followers. Beyond the immediate effect on the situation the ultimate effect on the Levant might be most grave for British interests, and it seemed imperative to prevent this French preponderance if possible without doing anything to imperil the cordial relations between the French and British Intelligence Services. The first step I took to bring about a readjustment was to invite Ricaud out to lunch and try to win him over to my side.

"Ricaud," I began, "ever since you arrived in Athens last December, you and I have worked hand in hand without a breath of disagreement. Whatever the disagreements in London and Paris there was no trouble here until Admiral du Fournet



started to make himself important. If this precious piece of diplomacy initiated by M. Bénazet comes off, it will be the Admiral who will receive the credit of it, not Captain de Roquefeuil. However, let us leave the future of the Provisional Government out of it for the moment, and assume that Venizelism will be to all intents and purposes confined to Salonica. Let us assume that the King means what he says, and that he intends to move the remains of his army down into the Peloponnese, and that he keeps his word so completely and acts so sincerely that General Sarrail will no longer have any chance of claiming insecurity. Can you honestly believe that the Italians, who are beginning quite unjustifiably to push their noses into Greek affairs, will not start intriguing and will not use their hatred of Venizelism to upset any accord with the King? Even if they fail in doing this, can you suppose that they will not spend their time in plotting to ruin any system of control so completely French as Captain de Roquefeuil envisages? Now, listen to my proposal, and do not oppose it until you have considered its advantages. Why not let the principle of cutting Greece into three zones of influence be applied to the Controls themselves? Why not, for instance, for the sake of argument, make the Italians responsible for the posts and telegraphs, the British for the police, and the French for the railways? Let port control be a joint affair. Make Athens and the Piræus into an extra-territorial centre in which the three Controls will administer the port of Piræus jointly, and from which the three zones will be administered by their control officers under the presidency of Captain de Roquefeuil. Here is my idea in more detail. First of all port control. All the ports of Greece shall be directed by the Military Control Office, Athens, under three Military Control Officers, British, French, and Italian. Then the various ports will be administered by British, French, or Italian officers according to the zone in which they are situated, but all, of

course, directed from Athens. The same system will apply to police, to railways, and to posts and telegraphs. Under my scheme there will be nothing new except the constitution of Athens and the Piræus into an extra-territorial and supreme control. Presumably you will be the French representative, I shall be the British representative, and no doubt Mombelli will be the Italian representative. I am sure it would be far wiser to agree to this principle of Italian representation, because after all you and I can always outvote the Italian representative, and we shall always know what the Italians are up to in Preveza and Acharnania. Otherwise we'll leave them that zone of influence, and they'll do what they like. As a matter of fact, Mombelli has already sounded me on this matter, and he gave me every reason to suppose that the Italians are determined to hold up the whole business of these controls unless they obtain representation."

We discussed the business for some time, and finally Ricaud said that so long as it was certain that I should be the British representative on the Controls he thought that Captain de Roquefeuil would agree.

"But suppose your Government nominates some general instead of you?" he asked.

"There seems no reason why you should not make the appointment of Colonel Mombelli and myself and yourself a condition of accepting the proposal."

Ricaud would not commit himself absolutely before his chief came back, but I felt sufficiently sure of his support to tackle Colonel Mombelli that afternoon.

"I am thoroughly worried about the future of Controls," I told him. "De Roquefeuil is coming back *plus puissant que jamais*, and it looks to me very much as if the French will succeed in establishing the political and commercial supremacy in Greece at which they are aiming. Now, this will not suit

the immediate or the ultimate interests of either of our two countries, and it has occurred to me that if Italy were to ask for representation on the Controls you and I could always out-vote the French."

I then made Mombelli's flesh creep about French intentions, sketched out my plan in detail, and begged him if he thought well of it to spur the Italian Minister into making strong representations to Rome. Colonel Mombelli agreed with me and at once went off to talk to Count Bosdari. The Italian Minister had a consultation with Sir Francis Elliot, and finally both of them decided to send a strong demand to Rome and London respectively for my scheme to be adopted and pressed upon Paris.

Sir Francis Elliot sent a preliminary telegram to the Foreign Office on November 17th, and on the following day he called me in to give the general outline of my scheme in a long telegram to Lord Hardinge, of which the following is a rough paraphrase:

*It has come to my knowledge that Captain de Roquefeuil is coming back from France on the 24th of this month plus puissant que jamais. By this I mean that all the Ports and Railways, the Posts and Telegraphs, and Police of this country which at present are jointly controlled by the Allies will be under his sole command. His rule will not prove merely a theoretical one. He is returning from his own country with a considerable staff of officials who are to replace the temporary officers lent him by Admiral du Fournet, so that he will be able to control everything here and exercise his authority without consulting any of the other Ministers of the Entente or taking any of their various officers into his confidence. At the very moment of writing, this fact has been emphasized by a call at our office of the French official who claims to control the Piræus for his Government. According to him, his position should be supreme and Lieutenant Rogers, R.N.R., who is the representative of our Military Control Officer, should merely be allowed to*

go on board ships accompanied by a French officer with a detachment of Greek sailors.

Long before Du Fournet arrived on the scene we had arranged our scheme of Port Control and had got the Greeks tacitly to agree to it, so that this demand on the part of the French authorities is indicative of the way in which they have made up their minds to get the management of this country into their hands. The reason no doubt is the geographical position of Greece, lying as it does half-way between the French ports of the Mediterranean and the Syrian coast.

It might consequently be a wise thing to suggest a definite division of controls so that equal rights and privileges should be shared by the French, British, and Italian administrations.

The following suggestions are submitted :

1. That an Italian officer should take over the Control of the Posts and Telegraphs.
2. That the Railways should be controlled by a French officer.
3. That a British officer should control the Police.
4. That the Military Control Officers should direct the Port Control from Athens ; moreover, that irrespective of rank, Italian and French officers should have the same status as our own Military Control Officer.
5. That the French Naval Attaché de Roquefeuil should be President of all Controls.

The idea of cutting up this country into departments has long ago been agreed to by the three Powers of the Entente, so that the present suggestion does not alter any of the existing conditions in regard to our control in the Peloponnese, and those islands, not occupied by the French : nor does it affect Italy's control in Achar-nania or the Epirus : nor the control France exercises in other parts of Greece. It is suggested that Athens should act more or less as a District of Columbia and be the seat of Government for the various

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*controls. The French would still in a measure be at the head of affairs but in this way would lose their great preponderance of power, which is gradually beginning to threaten the varied interests involved and tending to put an end to the main reason for which this advisory control was instituted.*

*This scheme would also be of material help to our anti-submarine as well as our contraband Intelligence.*

*It would give us the Police Control which the Germans used so greatly to their own advantage. There is no doubt that we should obtain most valuable results from this arrangement.*

*The suggested enlargement of the British sphere in Greece would mean the increase of our staff by about twenty British officers who would all have to be able to speak Greek. They could of course be over military age. About eight or so suitable officers could no doubt be found here or in the Near East. The additional expenditure per month would amount to about £500 outside the salaries of the officers.*

*The above suggestions are made by Compton Mackenzie. I heartily endorse them all, and so does the Italian Minister who has been consulted on the matter and is sending a telegram to Rome on the same lines. I think it most imperative that Rome and London should arrive at some definite decision of action before the French Naval Attaché and his new staff of officers arrive in Athens.*

*I should like once more to point out that there is no doubt that the French Government intends as far as possible to establish a commercial and political supremacy in this country. The proposal put forward in this scheme would tend to frustrate plans which their Naval Attaché undoubtedly means to carry into effect.*

## SOWING THE WIND

On November 16th, Admiral Dartige du Fournet sent the following letter to Mr. Lambros, the Prime Minister, whose

Government had on October 10th succeeded the Government of Mr. Calogeropoulos:

Monsieur le Président:

During the last weeks the Greek Government has been able to reassure itself that the Powers of the Entente formally recognize the right of Greece to preserve her neutrality so far as actual fighting is concerned. Moreover, the establishment of a neutral zone north of Thessaly guarantees you practically against any raid by armed groups, such as recently took place at Ekaterini.

The Greek Government on its side has renewed the categorical assurances of a benevolent neutrality toward the Powers of the Entente, and among the pledges of this benevolent neutrality which it has recently given, one of the most appreciated has been the re-establishment of the Army on a peace-footing and the transference which is now being carried out of the 3rd and 4th Army Corps and the 16th Division to the Peloponnese. Nevertheless, the surrender of Fort Rupel and of Cavalla to the Bulgarians and above all the abandonment of the important material of war therein has created in favour of the enemies of the Entente a rupture of equilibrium of considerable importance.

The French Government, anxious to restore this equilibrium and desiring to put at the disposal of the Commander in Chief of the Army of the Orient an equivalent surplus of material of war, has decided to ask of the Greek Government the delivery of all that surplus material which it now possesses and which by the re-establishment of the Army on a peace-footing is no longer required. Therefore I have received from my Government an order to claim from the Greek Government 16 field batteries with 1,000 shells for each gun, 16 mountain batteries with 1,000 shells for each gun, 40,000 Mannlicher rifles with 220 cartridges for each rifle, 140 machine-guns with the proportionate number of cartridges, and 50 motor transport lorries.

In a recent Note on the subject of the Light Flotilla I informed the Greek Government that I was empowered to offer

a just indemnity as compensation for the surrender; but no reply was made to this proposal.

I have the honour to assure you in my present Note that the French Government is still disposed to offer equitable compensation for any war material delivered up to us, or to pledge itself to restore at the close of hostilities the equivalent amount of material in perfect condition.

As events make the present demand a matter of urgent necessity, the French Government demands as an earnest of the goodwill of the Greek Government that 10 mountain batteries should be immediately handed over to me, and the remainder of the material should be handed over with the least possible delay.

The material must be placed in the Thessaly railway-station in Athens, whence it will be transferred to Salonica at our charge, and I ask that an officer nominated by you should be sent to me to arrange the details of the carrying out of these measures.

No reply was immediately forthcoming to this demand; but the following day Royalist troops occupied the University, where among the students, as might be expected from youth, sympathy with the Provisional Government of National Defence was unanimous.

During the afternoon of Saturday, November 18th, I was visited at the Annexe by a deputation of them who came to ask whether or not they were entitled to continue their demonstrations in favour of the Provisional Government and to complain that an effort was being made by the troops in occupation of the University to suppress them.

I told them that as a British officer I was debarred from attempting to influence their political convictions one way or the other. It was their duty to give cheers for the King if they believed in his policy and equally their duty to give them for Mr. Venizelos if they believed in his. The deputation thanked

me and retired into the Square outside the Legation, where some four or five hundred students cheered Venizelos and the Entente for over half an hour.

This incident may seem trivial; but so much capital has been made by propagandist writers of the fictitious and hireling enthusiasm in Athens for the Provisional Government that an instance of spontaneous enthusiasm like this offers a significant illustration of the true state of feeling. These young men gathered from every part of Old and New Greece, represented the flower of the country's youth, and twenty-three years later the vision of those passionately eager young faces as they babbled of their ideals still flashes before my eyes. Not otherwise may have babbled those young heroes whom the Centaur Cheiron taught in the gorges of Mount Pelion.

That evening the decision was made by the Allied Ministers to invite the French Admiral to ask for the expulsion of the staffs of the enemy Legations, the prologue to which has already been related.

On Monday, November 20th, Count Bosdari called at the Annexe to tell me that everything I had asked for with regard to the various Controls had been agreed to by the Italian Government. With this assurance from Bosdari I felt that what I had planned to effect was likely to be accomplished.

The following day agents were sent to watch the enemy Legations, and on Wednesday, November 22nd, at noon I drove down to the Piræus to see them depart for Cavalla by the S.S. *Mycæle*. The German and Austrian Eagles were fluttering from the forepeak with the Crescent and the Bulgarian Lion. This annoyed the French Admiral, who sent an order for the flags to be hauled down at once.

Reports were now insistent that the situation in Roumania was growing worse hourly. There was little doubt that the prospect of a Roumanian catastrophe had entirely changed the



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King's point of view, and the influence of M. Bénazet's blandishments was by now hardly perceptible.

It was a relief to see the staffs of the enemy Legations depart, for the situation in Athens was beginning to look ugly. There was no way of preventing the King's communicating with Berlin by wireless, but he would at any rate lack Falkenhausen's analysis of the military situation if Roumania should crash. And Falkenhausen's power of analysis was more than persuasive.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that in spite of urgent requests for information about the state of affairs on the Roumanian front no information was sent to Athens. We now know that during this time the futures of many politicians at home were threatened by impending changes. No Greek tragedy has ever provided us with a richer irony than Lord Beaverbrook's account of the manœuvres on the home front during this November, in his second volume of *Politicians and the War*.

That afternoon Bridgeman came round to the Annexe, and I expounded my scheme of Controls in detail with the help of a large map, which as I write these words is before me, marked with red pencil lines for Great Britain, with blue for France, and with green for Italy. The scheme is printed as an Appendix.

A long telegram was sent off to the Foreign Office giving the details of my scheme. This was repeated by the Italian Minister to Rome, and on November 23rd, I telegraphed to London and Alexandria:

*Following is brief extract of a telegram sent by Foreign Office to Paris in which Rome concurs. French are pressed to reply immediately.*

- (Begins) 1. *President of Controls to be French Naval Attaché.*  
2. *Central Control of Railways under French.*  
3. *Central Control of Police under British.*  
4. *Central Control of Posts and Telegraphs under Italians.*

5. *Port Control to be directed from Athens under three Military Control Officers, the French and Italian representatives to have same status as Mackenzie, irrespective of rank.*
6. *Greece to be divided into sectors for control, i.e. British to have Peloponnesus and all islands unoccupied by the French or Italians, Italians to have Epirus and Achaënanian, French to have rest of Greece.*

*(Ends)*

*Minister has asked Foreign Office for authority to employ twenty Greek-speaking Englishmen for administering our sector by this organization. I am therefore not sending new officers immediately to their posts.*

The same day Captain George Braggiotti arrived from Alexandria, having been sent from there as the first of the twenty British officers we had asked for to occupy posts as Control Officers. In spite of his name and a long association with Constantinople Braggiotti was as English as Cranford. He has too keen a sense of humour to mind my saying in print that the first impression his arrival made on us was that an old maid had been let loose in the Annexe. He was a man some years senior to myself; but, although fussy and full of questions impossible to answer, he was most willing to obey my orders with courtliness and goodwill. The post for which he was designated was that of British Port Officer at Patras, where his ability to speak Italian would be of service in maintaining cordial relations with his Italian colleagues there.

About the same time as Braggiotti arrived from Alexandria Captain Fago joined the Passport Control as Italian representative. The triple visa, which had been rejected so scornfully when I first proposed it in the Memorandum of June 17th, was at last achieved.

Unfortunately the arrival of these officers coincided with the

loss of Hasluck, who was ordered by his doctor to leave at the earliest possible moment for a sanatorium in Switzerland. This meant that he would be accompanied by his wife and that we should lose our registrar and our chief cipherer.

The loss of Hasluck was irreparable. We were never again to have the services of such an accurate, patient, and logical mind to put into shape the inaccurate, hasty, and haphazard information that reached us about people, places and events. I hope that I have made it clear in these *Memories* how much we all owed him, and most of all myself. His death in Switzerland in 1920 took from the world a great gentleman and a fine scholar.

On the evening of November 23rd Ricaud informed me that news had come from Paris that Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador, had asked for Russia to be represented on the Controls Board. I was perturbed by this, because it looked as if the French, having suddenly realized that the British Control Officer would hold the balance of power, were egging on the Russians to demand representation in order to vote with them if necessary and so give de Roquefeuil, as president of the four representatives, the decisive vote.

"But how can the Russians do anything?" I asked. "They have no means of getting any personnel here."

"It has been suggested that we should supply the personnel," Ricaud said, with a dark glance at me.

Isvolsky's vanity was notorious. When war broke out he used to refer to it as 'ma guerre'. I was certain that such vanity had been successfully played upon and that the manœuvres I had used in Athens had been repeated in Paris.

"Well, if the Russians are put on the Controls," I said, "that will mean the beginning of endless trouble, because the only job that could be offered to them would be Police Control, in which case I shall be off the board, and you'll have a British

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general sent out, whom you won't find it so easy to work with as me. And that will mean you will have to go too, Ricaud, because they won't make you a general, and before they've finished we shall have about five generals out here doing the work or rather talking about doing the work which you and I have been doing."

I little knew when I suggested this lamentable possibility that I was uttering an all-too-true prophecy of what was actually to happen early the next year. My only mistake was in under-estimating the number of generals that would be required.

Ricaud was shaken by this argument and told me that strong recommendations should be sent from Athens for my appointment as the Control Officer of Police. At present, of course, the Control Officer of Police was a Frenchman, to whom I was to write the following letter that evening:

November 23rd, 1916.

*Monsieur le Commandant Roque,*  
*Chef du Contrôle de la Police,*  
ATHÈNES

*Sir :*

*I have the honour to bring the following case to your notice.*

*It appears that the Police Officers of all the Police divisions of the capital are doing their utmost to get Inspector J. Maroudas dismissed the force. They allege that on the day of the Venizelist demonstration by the students a Venizelist named Lagoudakis attempted to kill the Greek Sub-Inspector Kranaki, and held a revolver to the latter's head. The assailant was immediately arrested. Maroudas not only had Lagoudakis released, but he ordered his revolver to be returned to him, as in his opinion the Sub-Inspector was the aggressor.*

*According to the 'Chronos' Maroudas has already been dismissed and the case is to be tried to-day.*

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*I wish to protest emphatically against the proceedings against Maroudas. He has rendered most valuable service to us in extremely difficult circumstances and I beg you will bring this matter to the notice of the Greek authorities so that his dismissal or proposed dismissal may immediately be withdrawn.*

*I have the honour to remain,*

*Your obedient Servant,  
Compton Mackenzie,  
Captain, R.M.,  
Military Control Officer.*

As I signed that letter I promised myself that officers like Maroudas should not be exposed to dismissal under our régime.

Another letter I wrote that evening indicates the methods the Italians were now taking to consolidate their position in the Dodecanese:

*November 23rd, 1916.*

*Dear Count Bosdari :*

*I should like to call your attention to a particularly distressing case.*

*A certain Nicolas Kairis, a Greek of Leros, is a native of the island and lived there with his family before Leros passed into Italian control. He has been employed for over two years in British merchant ships as a merchant seaman carrying merchandise of war. He bears a first-class record as his papers will show you.*

*On September 25th, he left Cardiff for Leros with his papers quite in order. His Italian passport with the Italian stamp at Cardiff is subjoined. He landed at Piræus, came to the Anglo-French Control Office, made an application, and his paper was given him, signed and in order to proceed to Leros. He left by the S.S. George for Samos. From Samos he took a sailing vessel to Leros. He was not allowed to land : the Italian Government*

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or Police Officer sent him back by the sailing vessel to Samos. From Vathy (Samos) he took the S.S. Vasilefs Constantinos and arrived again at the Piræus. He was given no explanation why he was not allowed to land.

In view of this man's having such an excellent record from British merchant ships and his wishing to rejoin his wife and family who are living on the Island, I believe you will agree that he is entitled to land at Leros.

Would you very kindly consider the case, and should you think as favourably of it as I do, would you give him permission to land at Leros, and also inform the authorities on the island to that effect?

I hope you will forgive my troubling you with this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Compton Mackenzie.

I enclose all his papers.

That evening we received news that the great ship *Britannic* had been sunk off the Island of Zea. It was not known whether by mine or torpedo.

On Sunday, November 19th, the French Admiral had had an audience of the King on the subject of his Note of November 16th, in the course of which he had mentioned the forthcoming expulsion of the enemy Legations. In his book \* Admiral Dartige du Fournet says the King did not seem much upset about the Legations, but spoke with great bitterness of the way the *Daily Mail* and the *Morning Post* were degrading public opinion in the Allied countries. He brought the audience to a conclusion by declaring that it would be impossible to give up the arms because he was afraid the Venizelists would come and attack him in his Palace if he did.

On November 21st, the Greek Government had replied formally to the Admiral's Note of the 16th, refusing to give

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral*, p. 191.

up the war material with or without compensation on the ground that such an action would be a breach of neutrality.

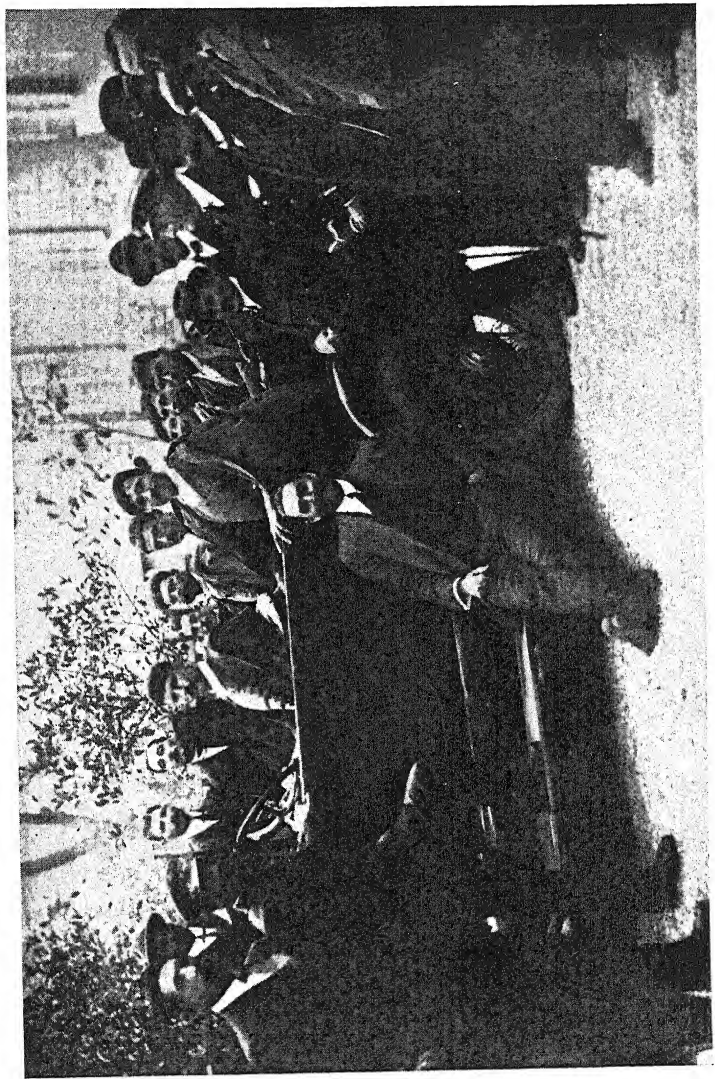
Friday, November 24th, was a critical day, for it was then that Admiral Dartige du Fournet replied to the Note of November 21st from the Greek Government by reiterating his demand for the delivery of the ten mountain batteries by December 1st.

*"And if I do not receive satisfaction by December 1st,"* he concluded, *"I shall be obliged to take any measures which the situation may demand."*

The French were perfectly confident that the Greeks would accept when it came to the point and they based their confidence on the fact that the King himself had proposed this very demand to M. Bénazet three weeks ago. So confident were they of the Greek surrender that with rash conceit and folly the Admiral gave the terms of his second Note to the Greek Press for publication the same evening.

There was an amusing diversion caused in the afternoon by the arrival of the band of the First Regiment of Foot with all their instruments in the courtyard of the Annexe in order to proclaim with suitable music their adherence to the Provisional Government. I sent Tucker down to say that I congratulated them on their decision, but that they must make the necessary arrangements with the French about going to Salonica, as I had no authority to give them transport. Tucker came up again to say they had already understood that, but that, being sensible of the loyalty and ardour with which I had supported all patriots, they had felt they could not depart for the front without playing *God Save the King* and any other tunes I might care to hear. So I went out to thank them for the kindly thought, and stood to attention while they played the Greek National Anthem and *God Save the King*.

The First Regiment of Foot was supposed to be the most



Members of the Cretan Bodyguard off to join the Provisional Government in Salonica.  
Assistant-Paymaster Tucker is still without the executive curl of a lieutenant.





loyal regiment the King possessed, and to see them marching off with their instruments to the Piræus on their way to Salonica was an indication of the way things would go if only the Allies would make up their minds to give the Provisional Government the acknowledgment and support it deserved.

No sooner had the band of the First Regiment departed than about twenty members of the King's Cretan Bodyguard arrived to say farewell and follow the band to Salonica. Not one of them was under six feet two, and they looked magnificent fellows in their blue uniforms piped with yellow, their baggy-seated breeches, and top-boots with gilded tassels. Nothing, however, would induce them to leave Athens in a French motor-car. I could not bring myself to make this an occasion for adhering too closely to the pretence that we were not directly encouraging the followers of Venizelos, and I sent them down to the Piræus in our two Annexe cars with Robertson and Markham.

After the publication of the Admiral's Note in the Press the first warnings of the approaching storm were apparent. There was an air of restlessness in the streets. Groups of Reservists were chattering excitedly at the corners, and all through the night there was a noise of cavalry patrols rattling past. From the outlying villages of Attica and Bœotia Reservists began to stream into Athens.

About seven o'clock that evening Sir Francis Elliot came round to the Annexe to tell me that all the suggestions I had made about Controls had been formally approved by the Foreign Office and accepted by the French.

"I think you can congratulate yourself on the success of your diplomacy, Mackenzie."

"It will be time to do that, sir, when the First of December is past," I replied, "for I fear the worst on that day."

"We felt equally worried about the Note of June 21st," Sir Francis reminded me.

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I said I did not feel nearly so confident about the answer to the ultimatum which had been sent in to-day as I had felt about the answer to the ultimatum sent in on June 21st, and I asked Sir Francis if the French Admiral had consulted him either about the temper of the nation, or about any precautionary measures to avoid a disaster. He replied that the Admiral had acted entirely on his own initiative and responsibility without reference to the Allied Ministers.

"Has he indicated what he will do in the event of a refusal?" I asked.

"No," Sir Francis replied, "he seems to think that in presenting the Note he has done all that is necessary."

"Well, sir, this time I think we are for it," I said gloomily.

On the following morning, November 25th, Count Bosdari came round to tell me that two naval sub-lieutenants and six military officers were on their way from Italy for the Posts and Telegraphs censorship allotted to Italy under the new Control arrangement. He had also asked for an officer of the Carabinieri to be attached as liaison officer to the proposed British Control of Posts and Telegraphs in the Peloponnese.

Later on that morning Ricaud brought me four telegrams from the German Consul in Syra written in code and addressed to the German Legation in Athens. With these telegrams were some letters which offered conclusive proof that the German Consul in Syra was communicating to the German Legation the movements of Allied ships. The torpedoing or mining of the *Britannic* off Zea, which had been followed by the torpedoing or mining of the *Braemar Castle* in the Myconos Channel within sight of Syra, seemed to indicate that the sooner the enemy Consuls in that island were removed the better. They were, of course, due to depart under the terms of the Note demanding the expulsion of the enemy Legations; but an

extension of time had been granted to Consular officers in districts outside Athens.

It may be remembered that when the Note of June 21st was to be delivered I had made provisional arrangements to remove the whole of the Intelligence Service to Syra in the event of the Greek Government's refusal to accept the demands of the Allies. Feeling more and more pessimistic about the reply to the Admiral's Note, I resolved that if trouble should break out a week hence we would remove to Syra. What better headquarters could we find for ourselves than the enemy consulates? With this in mind I went across to the Legation with the intercepted letters and telegrams and suggested to Sir Francis it was high time that we got rid of the enemy Consuls from Syra. He agreed with me that it was necessary, but asked how I proposed to remove them. I reminded him that Engineer-Lieut.-Commander Knox was at Syra in charge of repairs to His Majesty's ships in the dockyard there, and I suggested that a telegram should be sent to Consul Hastings authorizing Lieut.-Commander Knox to arrest the Consuls of the enemy Powers, take over the consulates, and have the staffs sent up to Salonica to be given a passage home from there like the staffs of the Legations in Athens.

Sir Francis telegraphed instructions accordingly. Twenty-four hours later we heard that the German, Austrian, and Turkish Consuls in Syra had been expelled and their consulates taken over.

Sir Francis asked Ricaud why nothing had been done about these intercepted letters before. Seeing that they were of as much importance as evidence against enemy officials as the questionnaires we had extracted, he could not understand why they had not been shown to the French Admiral. Ricaud replied that he had himself handed them to the French Admiral a fortnight ago, and that the Admiral had remarked that, though

they might serve very well for journalists, they were of no practical importance.

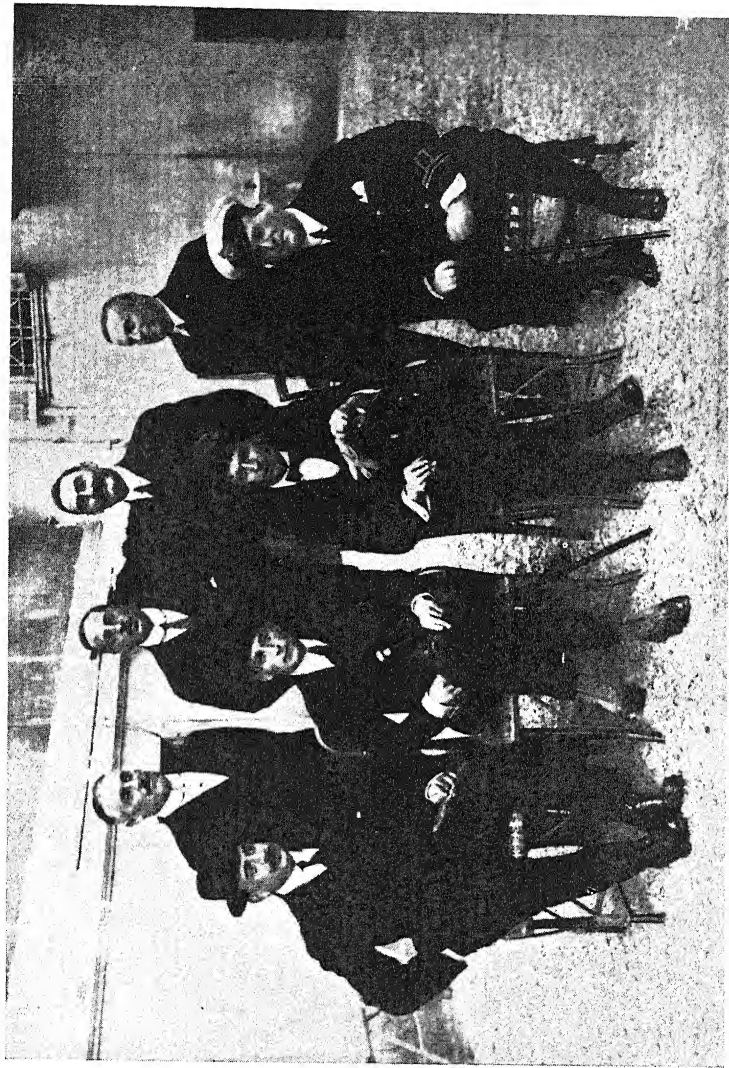
This indicates the state of affairs existing at this date between the French Intelligence Service in Athens and the Admiral.

All through that Saturday, November 25th, prominent Venizelists had been coming to the Annexe and imploring me to use my utmost powers of persuasion to obtain some kind of protection for them, because they were now convinced that the Royalists meant to resist the French demand and take the opportunity to level up old scores with their political enemies. In the evening I warned Sir Francis Elliot that, unless immediate steps were taken to secure hostages from the Royalist party, trouble was inevitable. Sir Francis, who had himself been visited by such prominent Liberals as M. Benakis, the Mayor of Athens, agreed with me that this was a reasonable measure of precaution and promised to drive down to interview the Admiral on his flagship the *Provence* next day.

In view of the bunkum which has been circulated by the apologists of the Court Party about a planned massacre of Royalists by Cretan revolutionaries it is important to note the growing panic of the 'revolutionaries'.

During that Saturday night all shops belonging to avowed Liberals were marked with crosses of red paint as an indication of those suitable for looting in the riots which were to be stirred up a week hence. I informed Sir Francis Elliot of this menacing act before he drove down in the *Sunbeam* next morning to interview the Admiral in the hope of convincing him that precautionary measures for the safety of our friends were imperative. Admiral du Fournet pooh-poohed these warnings and said that he preferred to rely upon the King's word rather than upon anything in the nature of Intelligence, for which he expressed as usual the profoundest contempt. He laughed heartily at the story about the red paint. He even went so far as to suggest it

In the courtyard of the Annexe of the British Legation, November 25th, 1916:  
 ZANARDI LANDI CAUCHI TSITSOPOULOS LAZAREVITCH



CAPT. FAGO SELF COM. W. F. SELLS, R.N. -LT. TUCKER, R.N.V.R.

The suit I was wearing was the only one saved from the sack of my house a few days later. I wore it again at the Guildhall and in the dock of the Old Bailey sixteen years later. The swordstick was given to me by C.



was the work of French Intelligence agents, though what conceivable advantage French Intelligence agents expected to derive from it he was of course unable to say. However, Sir Francis stuck to his point, and at the end of the interview the Admiral went so far as to agree with him that perhaps precautions should be taken. He added, however, that nothing could be done for the present, because he had received orders from his Government to ask an audience of the King on Monday morning.

I am under the impression that it was on that Sunday evening I met Captain Amery \* in the Grande Bretagne Hotel. He had just crossed from Corfu and was on his way to Salonica. He seemed to fancy that he was completely *au fait* with the situation in Greece, having been coached by one of the Ministers in the late Skouloudis Cabinet whom he had met on the boat. By this time I was incapable of being shocked by the ignorance of professional politicians of everything except professional politics, and though no doubt I tried over coffee to present him with the realities of the Greek situation it is unlikely I expended much energy on trying to penetrate the impenetrable. He was extremely genial, and reminded me of a friendly bulldog.

On Monday, November 27th, King Constantine gave an audience to the French Admiral, who insisted on the terms of his ultimatum and went away from the interview apparently quite pleased with himself.

That afternoon de Roquefeuil returned from Paris. I called on him at the School and argued in the strongest terms the risk of trying to enforce the demand for mountain batteries on December 1st unless steps were taken to guard ourselves and our friends against the worst excesses of which the Royalists in their present mood were capable. De Roquefeuil was convinced that the Greek Government would surrender at the last minute.

\* The Right Hon. L. S. Amery, P.C., M.P.



I assured him that the situation was rapidly passing beyond the control of the Greek Government, and that whether the Government agreed to surrender the arms or not resistance was certain and that this would be followed up by a massacre of Venizelists.

"The situation has changed completely, since you left Athens, M. de Roquefeuil, and you must allow me to be in a better position at the moment than yourself to estimate the probable course of events."

In the end he was sufficiently impressed by my arguments to authorize Ricaud to take up the matter with Sir Francis Elliot. That evening Sir Francis, after consultation with Ricaud and myself, decided that twenty Royalist Greeks of high position must be arrested as hostages. Ricaud said that he would go down himself that night to the *Provence* and pave the way for a visit from Sir Francis and myself to the Admiral next day.

On November 29th, Plunkett left for Taranto. He said he felt rather bad about going off at such a critical moment, but that there was nothing more for him to do in Athens, and that even if he stayed he should leave the sole command to myself.

At a quarter-past eleven the Minister and I drove down to the Piræus and urged the Admiral to seize as hostages various people like Gounaris, and even Mercati, the King's Chamberlain. The Admiral, although he had promised Ricaud the night before that he would arrest a certain number of prominent Royalists, now absolutely declined to arrest anybody. Sir Francis argued with the tiresome and pompous little man, and in the course of the interview he alluded to the information (*renseignements*) I was receiving about the placing of guns to command the roads to Athens and hoped that such information was being handed to him by my French colleagues. The Admiral clicked his finger against his thumb with a gesture of contempt and said:

*"Excellence, je m'en fiche des renseignements."*

There was nothing to be said after that, and the interview came to an end.

I spent the rest of that Tuesday in trying to move influential personages to take some decisive action to cope with a refusal to give up the arms on Friday. Information was coming in faster and faster to the effect that resistance would certainly be offered. I was able to say exactly where every Greek detachment would be placed, and every gun. Since all this information was as much military as political, I took care to give copies of these reports to Colonel Fairholme and I asked him to telegraph them urgently to the War Office, so that influence could be brought to bear on the Foreign Office either to hold up the attempt to take the guns or to insist that the French Admiral must change his plan of operations. I was able to forecast exactly what was to happen on December 1st, and the information I handed to the Military Attaché would have served him as well for a report after the events as for a forecast.

I considered the dispatch of a telegram to Sir Edward Carson, but decided it was too late for him to do anything and that such a telegram might do more harm than good. I need not have worried. The struggle for political power in London was then rapidly approaching its maximum intensity. The French Admiral was not the only man in Europe with an ultimatum ready for delivery on December 1st. Mr. Lloyd George had one in his pocket for Mr. Asquith, and he was showing himself a better hand at taking precautions.

In justice to Admiral du Fournet, it must be added that the French diplomats and officials in Athens were still confident that the King would keep his word and honour the suggestion he had himself made. It was useless to point out that he had made this suggestion with considerable reservations, among which had been what amounted to the exaction of a promise

to disown Venizelos and the Provisional Government. Yet, although the French generally believed or professed to believe that the arms would be surrendered, there was not a word said in favour of the French Admiral's method of demanding them.

We had news that Tuesday that four more ships had been sunk by submarines in Greek waters, and I was not surprised to hear that all active patrolling had been neglected for the past two months by the French fleet.

"Admiral Dartige du Fournet *s'occupe faisant de la politique*," said young Heurtel. "All he is thinking about now is how he can persuade the King to come and have lunch with him on the *Provence*."

On Wednesday, November 29th, Colonel Mombelli called at the Annexe, and he agreed with me that the situation was rapidly becoming acute. The Admiral's only idea, he said, was to make friends with the King, and score a personal triumph over de Roquefeuil and Admiral Lacaze, the French Minister of Marine. I asked him if he could not persuade Count Bosdari to protest against the folly of the proposed line of action on December 1st. Mombelli shook his head. He said nothing, but I knew that he was thinking how much Count Bosdari was relishing the prospect of a French humiliation.

By now I was so thoroughly apprehensive of the worst, that on Friday I made up my mind, if Ricaud would help, to seize a few prominent Royalists with the 'Anglo-French Secret Police' and hold them in safe places as hostages for the security of their political opponents. Unfortunately, I was unable to persuade my colleague to commit himself. He said that, although he agreed absolutely with me about the fatuous behaviour of the Admiral, it would be too grave a breach of naval discipline to disobey his orders in the way I was proposing. Moreover, after all, he added, the Greeks would probably give up the arms when

it came to the point. He was lunching with me at the time at my house in Ghizi Street, and I said to him across the table that apart from the information available I had an unshakable pre-sentiment of disaster and that I had been troubled by ill omens.

"*Mais quoi donc? Vous n'êtes pas superstitieux?*" he laughed.

"Oh, you can laugh," I said, "but in moments of crisis I do believe in omens. There's only one thing left now to make me feel finally convinced that the worst is going to happen the day after to-morrow, and that is for me to see a peacock."

At this Ricaud roared with laughter.

"*Un paon!* Come, come, my friend, that is really altogether too ridiculous. An intelligent man like you to be frightened by a peacock? *Ah non, par exemple!* But I think you can be quite calm, because it is not likely you will be seeing any peacocks to-day."

At this moment there was a tap on the dining-room door, and Robertson came in.

"Davy Jones would like to see you, sir," he said. "He has just returned from his mission to Sparta, and he has brought you back two peacocks as a present."

Even Ricaud looked a little shaken by this coincidence. My own feelings can be imagined.

I went downstairs, and there in the garden actually was Davy Jones with two superb peacocks, one of which immediately jumped on Robertson's back.

"Take those damned birds away! Take them away at once!" I gasped. "Never let me see such birds again."

"But they are a present from the Demarch of Sparta," Davy Jones protested. "He has sent them to show you how very glad he is being since the Port Controls were coming to the Peloponnesos. He is really being very much glad indeed and says all mens in the Peloponnesos wish for British Control. They are

being very glad in Patras also, because now they can sell all currants more easier."

But the goodwill of the Mayor of Sparta and the rosy prospects of the currant trade did not avail to lull my perturbed spirit.

"Take those blasted birds out of this garden at once," I said to Davy Jones.

I found when I got back to the Annexe that he had taken them there and that in consequence there was not a single one of our Greek employees who did not expect to be dead within a day or two. What happened to the peacocks I never heard. There were enough omens of disaster in the solid facts of the information coming in every half-hour without auguries from birds.

It was rather in the spirit of Ajax defying the lightning that in Erskine's little room off the Chancery I expressed a belief that after all nothing would happen on Friday and that we were fretting ourselves for nothing. However, Talbot, who had no need to restore his self-respect after being frightened by the appearance of warning peacocks, would not listen to our attempt at optimism.

"There's going to be hell here on Friday," he declared. "Haven't you heard that damned fool of an Admiral has withdrawn the statement he issued last night about holding the political leaders responsible if a single Venizelist shop were pillaged?"

I had indeed heard of that criminally foolish withdrawal in response to a letter from Mercati, the King's Chamberlain, promising that there would be no disorder on Friday if there were no arrests by the 'Anglo-French Secret Police' and no provocation by Venizelists.

Talbot and Sells both telegraphed to the Admiralty that evening in the hope of persuading the D.I.D. to use his influence to stop the tragedy which was impending; but no word came from London. I was debating over my own telegram when Sir

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Francis Elliot called at the Annexe to ask if I could let him have some revolver bullets for a friend of his who feared the worst on Friday.

When Sir Francis had left I sent the following telegram to C:

November 29th, 1916.

*Very Urgent.*

*French Admiral last night issued authoritative statement that if Venizelist shops were pillaged in accordance with threats of Reservists he would hold leaders of agitation personally responsible. King sent Note late to Admiral that there would be no disorder if no arrests by Allied Police and no provocation by Venizelists. Admiral withdrew his threat this morning and so has offered free hand to agents provocateurs. King this morning conferred with leaders of First Army Corps and I have reliable information that conclusion arrived at was our inability to get the arms.*

*French Admiral may land his troops at Piræus, but he cannot do anything else without exposing his troops to heavy losses. King is playing for time in order that Germans may finish up with Roumania and afterwards assist him. Military advantage may not be much but moral advantage will be great in view of Teutonic policy in Balkans. Attitude of French Admiral is being very strongly criticized by his own people who will not hesitate to press for his recall. Besides all Venizelist shops all friendly houses in Athens and Phaleron now marked with red paint.*

*Personal to C.*

*I am convinced a massacre of Venizelists is being planned and I submit you should warn Lord Hardinge personally and try to obtain cancellation of Admiral's powers.*

I spent the rest of the evening and half the night in taking down reports and in trying to establish an atmosphere of calm among our people at the Annexe who by this time were thor-

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oughly rattled. It was not easy. When I drove back with Robertson in the Sunbeam to Ghizi Street I noticed that there were lights in the café at the corner and in one of the rooms I could see a crowd of Reservists arguing excitedly.

"An ugly-looking lot," I commented.

"Yes, sir," Robertson agreed.

The final omen was delivered to me when I reached the house just after three o'clock.

"*Josephine voulez parler monsieur,*" announced Lisa, who was sitting up for me as she always did, however late I was.

Josephine slept in a kind of cupboard under the stairs with her child, and Lisa proceeded to rout her out.

"*Josephine voulez faire cartes,*" Lisa announced.

So Josephine emerged from her cupboard under the stairs, and I was given the pack of cards with which she desired to foretell the future.

I cut the pack in three, and when the cards were turned I saw the Ace of Spades upside down, the Seven of Clubs, and another black card.

"Death, treachery, and violence," Josephine proclaimed in Greek.

This was the message from Fate, pondering which I turned over to sleep that night.

Next morning as I drove down early to the Annexe I noticed bands of Reservists on their way to the barracks being cheered by the crowds as they went. Information came in that one hundred and fifty rounds were being served out to each man with or without a uniform.

I sat down and dispatched the following telegram to London:

*Very Urgent.*

*November 30th, 1916.*

*Local Reservists are joining the barracks in large numbers. 150 rounds served out to each. Have reliable information that*

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*Royalists heard yesterday by secret wireless that all is up with Roumania. Please wire with great urgency the situation there. Consider military situation here depends on news from Roumania. Everything is prepared for the retirement of King and Army to Thessaly. 4,000,000 okes of wheat were requisitioned yesterday.*

*Secret and Personal for C:*

*In event of telegraphic communications being cut I shall take measures that seem best to ensure safety of personnel and maintain Intelligence Service without waiting for authorization.*

At four o'clock news was brought in that one of the French officers in charge of the Control of Posts and Telegraphs had been pulled out of his car and compelled to take refuge from the mob in an hotel in Omonia Square. The moment I heard this, I knew positively that the situation to-morrow would be as serious for Allied subjects in Athens as for Venizelists. It was the first time that a British or a French officer in uniform had been attacked since I had been in Greece. What was particularly ominous was that, when a Greek soldier had drawn his revolver to fire at the Frenchman, his own superior officer had caught hold of his wrist, and exclaimed, "Stop, it is not time yet for that."

At six o'clock Sells and I got hold of Rear-Admiral Hayes-Sadler, who was in the Legation, and we warned him as earnestly as we knew how that he must be prepared for the worst to-morrow. He tried to reassure us, insisting that the French Admiral had positive pledges from the King that no violence would happen; but we were not reassured.

Admiral Hayes-Sadler left us before dinner, and later on Major Huntingford, R.M.A., the liaison officer on board the *Provence*, came into the Annexe for final news.

I warned him as solemnly as I had warned Admiral Hayes-



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Sadler that the worst would happen to-morrow, and that Greek troops were now marching to defend the routes of march of which the French Admiral had already courteously informed the King. Huntingford told us that the first disembarkation of the French would take place at midnight and that three points had been chosen as objectives. All three, I pointed out to Huntingford from my information, were commanded by superior forces of Greek troops and guns. I also pointed out that the telephone to the *Provence* had been cut off, and that we should have no means of communication with the flagship to-morrow. While we were talking Ricaud came in with a telegram sent by the Greek Government to the United States in which the King definitely announced his refusal to give up the guns and ammunition and protested against his treatment by the Allies. By this time my colleague had given up all pretence of believing that the Greeks would surrender the arms next day, and when he left us I asked Major Huntingford to note his lack of confidence.

Huntingford said he would put all my information before the French Admiral at once; but he did not seem hopeful that any attention would be paid to it.

Admiral Dartige du Fournet has given the details of an interview he had with the Allied Ministers that evening in which he professes to remember '*textuellement*' some remarks made by M. Guillemin and himself. He says that the Ministers did not seem uneasy about the issue next day. I fancy that the Admiral was too much preoccupied with his own rehabilitation to remember what did happen at that interview. Anyway, I sent him a warning by his own liaison officer that his seamen would be shot down to-morrow.

"The bitterness of my regrets," he writes,\* "when I think of my fifty brave seamen who perished on December 1st, vic-

\* *Souvenirs de Guerre d'un Amiral*, p. 215.

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tims on the one side of the manifold mistakes of an incoherent and rash policy, and on the other side of an abominable treachery."

There was a third side of which they and the British Marines who were shot down as they were getting up from lunch were victims, and that was the obstinacy, vanity, egoism, pettiness, and stupidity of the Admiral himself.

After giving me a copy of the Operations Orders from the *Exmouth* Major Huntingford left the Annexe and went back to the *Provence*.

### OPERATION ORDERS

'EXMOUTH'

30th November, 1916.

No. 1.

Reference to tracing attached.

1. The British Force will be the 3rd Battalion, Bis, and will co-operate with the 3rd French Battalion.

2. The two Seaman Companies (O.C.'s Lieutenant Priestley and Lieutenant Palliser) will march to the Zappeion.

The Royal Marine Company (O.C. Captain Palmer) will occupy the Powder Factory, Point C.

#### 3. ORDER OF MARCH

(i) Two French Companies for the Zappeion.

(ii) British Battalion, Seamen leading.

(iii) One French Company for Point C.

#### 4. COMMAND

The Allied Force for the Zappeion will be under the Command of Capitaine de Frégate Millot.

The Allied Force for Point C will be under the command of Major Harmar.

5. The route to be followed will be that indicated on the tracing in RED thus----- The Companies detailed for Point C will leave the main road between points 60 and 65, where a guide will be provided.

6. Should superior Greek Forces be encountered, the Battalion will take up a position on the line of hills Nymphes, Pnyx,

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and Philopappos (42m. 109m. 147m.), which position is to be held at all costs.

7. It must be impressed upon all ranks that there is to be no firing unless we are first fired at, or determined opposition is encountered.

9. Lieutenant Priestley will detail a guard for the British Legation, consisting of one double sentry post in four reliefs, under a Petty Officer. The night reliefs will sleep at the Legation.

8. One Able Seaman will be detailed by 'EXMOUTH' to act as Interpreter to Capitaine de Vaisseau Pugliesi Conti at the Zappeion.

10. No men are to enter Athens except those detailed for the Zappeion.

11. The 'EXMOUTH's' Surgeon will accompany the Royal Marine Company and the 'DUNCAN's' Surgeon the Seaman Companies.

(Signed)      CHR. O. HARMAR,  
Major, R.M.

There was now nothing I could do except concentrate on providing as far as I could for the safety of those under my orders.

For the last two days I had noticed on my way back to my house an increasing number of scowling Reservists sitting about outside the surrounding cafés, and I had made up my mind that I should be safer sleeping out of the house for the present. It occurred to me, however, that if it were definitely known I was in the Annexe it might provoke an attack there to-morrow on account of my unpopularity with the Royalists. So at nine o'clock I told Knoblock to put on my military greatcoat, pull well down over his face my blue Marine uniform cap with the red band round it, and drive back to the house in Ghizi Street with Robertson in the Sunbeam. I had already sent Lisa down to the Piræus for Rogers to stow her away in some safe

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place, and Josephine and her son had gone off to spend the week-end with some friends.

It had been a habit of mine since I was shot at in the car to sit as low in the seat as I could beside Robertson, and I showed Knoblock how to sit as I used to sit every evening in the car on my way home. We had been wearing uniform in Athens for some time now. I told him to hurry inside as soon as he reached the house, which was entirely detached and surrounded by open waste ground, and to leave again immediately by the back door, get inside the back of the car, and lie down on the floor covered with a rug so that the Sunbeam would drive back at once to the Annexe apparently empty. If, as I felt sure it was, the house was already marked down, my enemies would suppose that I was inside and would surround it, certain of their vengeance when the convenient moment arrived.

I felt pretty sure that this ruse would secure the Annexe against attack.

I had given orders that all our own men were to spend the night in the offices. There were about fifty or so there, and this number was increased gradually throughout the night by the arrival of Venizelists in fear of violence and in the hope of our protection. By the morning there were over a hundred and twenty people in the Annexe.

I had an hour's uneasy sleep toward dawn on a table in the main office, the last sleep I was to get for many hours.

## CHAPTER XII: DECEMBER

### REAPING THE WHIRLWIND

THE first event I remember on the morning of Friday, December 1st, was the visit of Colonel Sir Courtauld Thomson, who had arrived in Athens late on the evening before from Salonica where he had been inspecting the Red Cross. The Chief Commissioner for the Mediterranean had great personal charm and delightful manners, in which courtliness was perfectly mingled with a kind of bland nonchalance. The object of his call was to consult us about the best way to see the classic sights of Athens. We warned him that he had chosen a bad moment for such an expedition. Nevertheless, he expressed a determination to reach the Acropolis and see the Parthenon, and off he went.

At a quarter to eleven Vassallo, the Athens correspondent of the *Corriere della Sera*, came into the Annexe, pale and breathless, to say that down at the Theseion a small patrol of French seamen had been surrounded by Greek troops. I telephoned the news to the French School in case help could be sent to them.

At half-past eleven violent firing broke out close to the Annexe, and all round the city. From the balcony we could see French sailors on the skyline of the hill Philopappos below the Acropolis and lines of Greek soldiers advancing against them. With the picture of those silhouetted figures in my mind's eye is a picture of 'Bijou' Elliot standing on the roof of the Legation with a pair of opera-glasses and watching the warlike scene. Then the Greeks opened fire and the French replied. We could see silhouettes falling dead and wounded, and then they dis-

appeared below the skyline. After this we could obtain no news at all of what was happening; but throughout the morning there was intermittent firing both close at hand and far away.

At a quarter-past one Colonel Fairholme came round to the Annexe to ask if I was driving down to the Grande Bretagne for lunch.

"Lunch?" I repeated. "It would surely be very imprudent to go out in the state the city is in now?"

"Nonsense," said the Military Attaché in his fruitiest voice. "I have just had word from General Callaris that everything is over. It has been a most unfortunate affair, but the French have only themselves to thank for it. I hope you can drive me down to the Grande Bretagne, Mackenzie, because I'm playing bridge there this afternoon, and I really don't want to walk."

I thought it would be undignified for me not to venture where the Military Attaché had decided to venture. So with Fairholme, Knoblock, and Braggiotti I drove off for lunch. The crowd in Stadium Street was excited; but there was no sign as yet of any rioting.

At the hotel we found Sir Courtauld Thomson, who told us that he had gone up with a guide to the Acropolis when he had left the Annexe, but that the guardian had refused to let him in because there was going to be a battle there that day. He had then wandered off to the Theatre of Dionysus, which he had reached just after eleven o'clock, and he was able to testify that he had seen Greek soldiers stationed among the rocks above open fire on the French when they advanced on Philopappos. This conclusive testimony from a peculiarly cool-headed eyewitness disproves the contention of Royalist apologists that the French fired first. When the firing started Colonel Thomson's guide had bolted and was not seen again, and while he was looking for the road back to the hotel an indignant young Greek subaltern had come up and asked him if he could not see that a

battle was in progress and that he was interfering with it by getting in the line of fire. Sir Courtauld Thomson had then strolled off to find his way back to the hotel and, meeting some Greek reinforcements commanded by a Colonel marching along the road by the Zappeion, he had stopped them and inquired the way back to the Grande Bretagne, which they had most politely shown him before proceeding to give battle.

Sells now reached the hotel, and from him I had an account of something of what had been happening. The Admiral, with his incredible belief in the majesty and magic of his own personality, had landed in the morning at the Piræus and driven direct to the Zappeion \* where he had been immediately surrounded by Greek troops and, to put it crudely, had lost his head.

The King had sent an offer by Prince Demidoff, the Russian Minister, to surrender six out of the ten mountain batteries if the Admiral would stop the fighting. He had replied that he would do so if the Greek Government confirmed the offer. The fighting had broken out again and machine-guns concealed in the shrubberies on either side of the large clear space in front of the Zappeion itself had opened fire. The Admiral had sent word to the Fleet to bombard the Stadium Hill, but this order he had afterwards cancelled. At half-past twelve the firing on the Zappeion had ceased, and Sells with General Bousquier, the new French Military Attaché, had gone to confer with the Admiral.

"My knees were like cotton-wool, lad," Sells said to me. "That open space in front of the Zappeion seemed the longest walk I ever took. It was so quiet that if my collar-stud had burst you'd have heard it fall. But I couldn't help thinking how easily those damned machine-guns hidden in the bushes might have started popping away again."

\* The Zappeion is a building in the classical style erected by the brothers Zappas in 1838 to house an exhibition of Greek industries. It is situated in a large public park.

"I sent word last night to the Admiral that they had placed machine-guns in the shrubberies commanding the Zappeion," I reminded Sells. "Well, what's the result of all this cross-talk between the King and the Admiral?"

"Nothing has really been settled yet," said Sells.

"Oh, I gathered from Fairy that he and General Callaris had settled everything," I murmured.

At this moment I saw Robertson coming toward us from the other end of the dining-room, his face as white as paper. When he reached our table he said in a curiously tense voice, the accents of which I still seem to hear:

"They are attacking the Legation, sir, and I think you ought to come at once."

I rushed away from the table, followed by Knoblock, Braggiotti, and Sells. Fairholme was lunching at another table, and as we passed I stopped to ask if he wished to come back too.

"Oh no, I don't think so," he said. "It's probably only one of those wild rumours that your ruffians are always starting. Besides, I have an appointment for bridge here at a quarter to three."

As we hurried down the steps of the Grande Bretagne, Jeffries of the *Daily Mail*, on fire as ever to serve his paper, asked if he might stand on the step of the Sunbeam and drive back to the Legation with us.

We had to move very slowly along Stadium Street, which was now filled with a murmurous crowd. About half-way down it a seedy-looking blackguard spat into the car, but at the same moment the Sunbeam bumped over another man's foot, and we passed on without a row. When we turned the corner out of Stadium Street into Dragatzani Street we saw a queer picture. On the left, outside the Ministry of Finance, about half a dozen Greek sailors were kneeling on the pavement with rifles held ready to fire but not actually aimed. Sir Francis Elliot, hatless,



but carrying an umbrella in his hand, was walking off in the direction of the Legation. Two of my men were standing on the balcony of the Annexe with revolvers, and several others were carrying a body through the gates into the courtyard. We jumped out, eager to hear the explanation of this scene.

Zammit, our chief Maltese agent, had seen a wounded French soldier being dragged along by a Greek patrol consisting of two soldiers, two non-commissioned officers, and a naval officer. On Zammit's calling for volunteers to rescue him, Poseidon with two or three of our porters had rushed out with revolvers and freed the Frenchman from the patrol. They were getting into safety when some sailors covered by the sentry-box at the Ministry of Finance opposite had opened fire on them. One of the porters, Francesco Manoussaki, had been shot through the lungs and Zammit himself was wounded in the shoulder. When the firing started two more of my men had rushed out on the balcony and fired back at the sailors with their revolvers. Sir Francis Elliot on hearing the noise had run out of the Legation, waving his umbrella, and ordered everybody to stop firing at once. His appearance as he hurried into the line of fire was described to me afterwards as like that of an elderly gentleman waving his umbrella to stop a bus.

The behaviour of the Greek sailors outside the Ministry of Finance was symptomatic of what was to come. By half-past three the Legation and the Annexe were completely surrounded by Greek troops. A machine-gun was mounted on the roof of one of the houses looking down into the courtyard of the Annexe, though this was removed later when its presence might have been awkward for the Royalist contention that their revenge upon the Liberals was no more than self-defence against a revolutionary outbreak.

Our isolation at the Annexe, the impossibility of obtaining any authentic news of what was happening, and the constant

outbursts of firing began to play on the nerves of some of my staff, and in order to check the signs of panic I set everybody in the offices to work as usual and dictated telegrams and reports myself, none of which I had any intention of sending, even had there been an opportunity.

One of the stenographers told me later that every time a shot was fired and she jumped, I said to her irritably:

"Do pay attention, Miss —, to what I'm dictating, and don't listen to street noises."

She said she felt like an inattentive child being reproached for listening to a barrel-organ when she should have been concentrating on her lessons.

In the course of the afternoon news came in that Bridgeman had been arrested as he was leaving the Legation. Later on we heard that Moon had been arrested on his way up from the Piræus and taken to the Chamber of Deputies where he had been searched for firearms. Both of them were released after a short detention, and Moon came beaming round to the Annexe to give an account of his experience.

Rendel\* now arrived from the Legation to say that it had just been reported to him that his house had been looted, and asked if I would let him take the Overland car, with Markham the chauffeur, and one of our porters to drive round to his house and verify this report. I was doubtful of the wisdom of this step, but Rendel felt sure that his diplomatic status would protect him, so in the end much against my will I let him have the car.

He found that all was well at his house, which was in a street near the Temple of Zeus and not far from the Zappeion; but on their way back they came under a cross fire from two bands of soldiers who were shooting at a Venizelist house, and the car was very badly damaged. Rendel and Markham were arrested and kept at a police-station for about an hour, after

\* Third Secretary at the Legation, *Athenian Memories*, p. 2, etc. Now H.B.M.'s Minister at Sofia.

which the house, Markham, and Rendel himself were all searched. Daskalakis, the porter, who had been pulled out of the car and beaten with clubbed rifles, did not get back. He was reported to have been killed and, notwithstanding repeated demands by the Legation, we could find out nothing about his fate. Markham's wife, who may be remembered from the previous volume as a temperamental Venetian, had an attack of acute hysterics on hearing of her husband's arrest, but her hysterics of joy were even more acute when he returned to the Annexe that night about eight o'clock safe and sound.

"Well, Markham," I said to the little man, "you've had an unpleasant adventure."

"Yes, sir," Markham agreed, "it was a bit of an adventure, sir. In fact we were treated a bit harsh, as you might say."

At half-past four we could hear the sound of firing from the direction of Constitution Square, and a number of soldiers came running into the square in front of the Legation. A violent fusillade broke out there a few minutes later. There was a shout that they were attacking the Annexe. Everybody rushed in a panic to close the shutters of the front windows, and I had to use some rough language before I could restore calm. Finally I allowed the shutters in front to be closed, for I discovered the darkness had a tranquillizing effect upon the men. It reminded me of putting a cover over a parrot's cage to stop its screaming.

The most incomprehensible part of the whole infernal muddle was why the French Admiral had not called upon the guns of the Fleet to speak. We were told that, no aeroplanes having been provided, it was impossible to get the range without running the risk of destroying ancient monuments. A careful perusal of Admiral Dartige du Fournet's apology leaves me still as much puzzled as I was at the time. The firing we heard at half-past four was a fresh bombardment of the Zappeion by the

Greeks, and this spurred the Admiral at last into ordering the guns of the Fleet to open fire.

Just before dusk two shells from light cruisers at Phaleron landed by the Palace, and during the evening sixty shells fell at intervals over the city, though very few of them burst.

The cease fire was ordered at nine o'clock after an agreement had been reached by the Allied Ministers, by which the Admiral concluded an armistice of three days and the King offered to give up six mountain batteries instead of ten. Then the garrison of the Zappeion marched back to the Piræus, three hundred of them escorted by sixty Greek soldiers and followed by the Admiral in his car.

At half-past six, being still without news and fearing an attack upon the Annexe during the night, I gave orders to burn certain papers and to take the most important documents over to the Chancery.

There seemed little hope that Francesco, the wounded porter, would live until the morning. The hæmorrhage was heavy, and the two nurses we had managed to get for him were pessimistic. Venizelist refugees were still creeping in one by one to get the protection of the Annexe. The Venizelists, for whose immunity no provision had been made in that precious armistice, had been having a bad time of it during the afternoon. Many of them had been badly mauled by the mob, some of them having been actually bitten as though by real wild beasts. The Annexe was like a nightmare, and this dream-like atmosphere was enhanced by the arrival of a bride with her mother, the priest who was to marry her, and a small wedding party.

The explanation of what seemed a fantastic apparition was that some days ago two young Greeks had lured a girl to a lonely house on the outskirts of Athens where one of them had violated her. The mother had come to request the help of the famous 'Anglo-French Secret Police' to avenge her daughter's honour.

Zanardi, always a knight-errant, with three of our men had seized the ravisher, brought him to the Annexe, and thrashed him. After the thrashing the guilty gentleman expressed a strong desire to marry the girl as soon as possible, and protested he should never have violated her if they had not already been betrothed and if her mother had not been tiresome about the furniture. So word had been sent to the girl's mother, who had arranged for the wedding to take place on the first of December. They had now arrived to perform the ceremony, which was carried through upstairs at the top of the Annexe. The bride presented me with her bouquet and several boxes of sugared almonds. The mother, the priest, and the bridegroom then shook me warmly by the hand and expressed their regret at inconveniencing me with a wedding at such a moment, after which the whole party left the Annexe during a quiet interval between two fusillades. The sugared almonds were most opportune. Indeed, except for some olives and a little bread and cheese, they were all we had to eat for a couple of days.

At eight o'clock two agents from the French service who had been arrested and released took refuge in the Annexe. I had been trying all day without success to get into touch with Ricaud at the French School. There were a quantity of papers in his part of the Annexe, and I was anxious to know if he wanted them to be destroyed.

Soon after this I left the Annexe to walk round to the Legation to find out if there was any news about the trend of events. Just as I stepped outside two rifles went off in the dark, a few yards from where I was. Then I heard the sound of running footsteps, and a cry of "Halt!" from a sentinel in the square. The sound of running footsteps continued. There was another shot followed by silence and a low moaning. I walked across the road to find out what had happened; but a couple of soldiers sprang out from the darkness and forced me back, sticking the

muzzles of their rifles into my ribs. So I gave up being inquisitive and retired into the Legation, where I heard the story of the King's conference with the Allied Ministers. He had been taking a strong line until a shell landed in the garden just outside the window, after which he had shown himself more reasonable.

At eleven o'clock word was brought up to my room that Francesco, the wounded porter, was going fast. A messenger had volunteered to sally out and find a priest, but none of those he asked would venture forth. Francesco, on hearing this, said that if a Catholic priest could be fetched he would turn Catholic, since his own priests were afraid to come out and give him the Last Sacraments. Another man volunteered to go out and find one; but when he did not come back after a couple of hours I felt obliged to forbid any more errands of mercy. One of the men had given Francesco a crucifix to hold as a light for the soul about to depart into the darkness. He was lying in a corner of the passport office on some coats, a handsome fellow with clear-cut features, now white as marble. In the other corner of the room four or five of his companions were squatting over a card game which was being played by the light of two guttering candles stuck on the floor. Francesco, who could not have been more than twenty-three or twenty-four, had already fought in the Balkan wars where he had been shot through the forehead, the hole in his skull still being visible.

"I am going to die, my captain," he whispered.

"Rubbish," I said. "A Cretan who has been shot through the head by a Bulgarian bullet will be ashamed to die from the bullet of a Boeotian reservist in his lungs."

Francesco smiled, and from that moment he began to recover. Indeed, he was so much better by morning that I felt justified in letting Filia Milioni and Sophia Psarakis, the two girls who were nursing him, go back to their house for clothes. When they arrived home they were immediately attacked by Reserv-

## GREEK MEMORIES

ists, treated with the vilest indignities, and dragged off to jail where they were kept for thirty hours without food shut up in one of the latrines. Their house was looted.

After this outrage upon the nurses the wounded porter was looked after by Miss Chapman, Miss Cook, Miss Gorkiewicz and Miss Rondaki, and so devotedly that it was possible to take him to Syra with us.

The rest of that long night passed without further disturbances. By this time there were nearly two hundred Venizelist refugees sleeping all over the Annexe on the floors. Everybody was tired, hungry, and depressed. Athens was black and silent. "It was like utter exhaustion after a rage of fever," as Knoblock noted down at the time. The Allied Ministers were conferring at the Legation until half-past two in the morning. I rested on the table in the front office as I wished to be at hand in case of panic among the mixed crowd in the Annexe, for one shot from an imprudent pistol might easily bring the whole place about our ears.

About five o'clock next morning I was wakened from an uneasy doze by a dishevelled young Marine.

"I heard there was a Marine officer here, sir," he panted, "and having got cut off from my detachment I wish to report. God, sir, it was awful yesterday. We'd only just sat down to have a bit of lunch by the side of the powder magazine near the cemetery, and we were just getting up when they opened on us over the wall and shot us down just as we were, sir, without a chance to reply. There's about thirty of our poor fellows gone, sir." With these words he burst into tears. "I don't know how I ever got here myself, sir. I've been wandering about all night."

I tried to examine the boy for details of what had happened to the British detachment, but he was too much shaken by his experience to be coherent. So I told him to get a rest and report

later in the morning to the Naval Attaché, who would tell him how to get back to his ship.

His testimony in spite of its incoherence is convincing as testimony against the tale that the Royalist troops did not fire first.

About ten o'clock \* one of the cars from the French School drove up, and out got Ricaud and Heurtel, with one or two others in uniform. Ricaud was gibbering with rage at the behaviour of his Admiral.

"Shut up in the Zappeion all day yesterday," he cried, "and escorted back to his flagship by a guard of Greek soldiers, *c'est honteux!* And now we are all ordered down to go on board a ship at once."

"What about your papers?" I asked. "If I can save them I will, and hand them over to you later; but if I think it prudent to destroy them I want your authority to do so."

"Act as you think best, my dear friend. That we must abandon you like this is odious to all of us."

"Well, it's not your fault."

Ricaud grasped my hand and said:

"It will perhaps be a pleasure for you in this *mauvais quart d'heure* to know that the Legion d'Honneur has been granted to you."

Then he hurried away downstairs. His blue boat-cloak was fluttering in the wind as he crossed the courtyard to enter the car.

We felt a little quiet and lonely after the French drove off; but at a quarter to eleven a violent fusillade broke out close to the Legation. The bullets were whistling continually over the back garden. From one of the houses just behind the Annexe the shooting was so furious that somebody cried out that a machine-gun had been turned on us, which set up another panic

\* Knoblock's note says that the French left at 3.30 in the afternoon. Perhaps they came twice to the Annexe.



and people began pulling out pistols and revolvers. I said I was tired of these panics, and that everybody must give up his arms. I was never free from the fear that one of our fellows would start firing from the Annexe and provoke an attack. Nevertheless, when I ordered the arms to be brought into my room I was met by an excited refusal. They did not mind fighting, but they were not going to be butchered like sheep. If the Annexe was attacked, they wanted to put up a show.

"If the Annexe is attacked, you silly fellows," I exclaimed irritably, "of course I'll let you have your pistols, but you must hand them over to me meanwhile so that they can be locked up in my room until I give the word to use them."

Still they would not obey.

"Look here," I urged, "the only person in this house of any real importance to the other side is myself. You don't suppose the Royalists are going to risk the unpleasant results of attacking the Legation merely to frighten a lot of sheep like you? And now as you won't believe me, I'll prove to you how unlikely they are to attack the Annexe by proving that they daren't even attack me."

With this I walked downstairs and out through the gate. Lighting a cigarette, I then strolled up Dragatzani Street into Stadium Street where I stood for about five minutes on the pavement, smoking and watching the mob swaying now this way, now that. One wretched Venizelist, a fat man, was being dragged along by half a dozen monkey-faced Reservists. Every time he stopped, some of them hit him in the face which was streaming with blood, while others prodded him in the back with their bayonets. Presently I became aware that the mob was beginning to notice my presence and when I heard my name called out by somebody I thought it was time to retreat. I had not felt at all frightened while I was standing on the pavement, but as soon as I turned round to walk back the hundred yards

to the Annexe my knees began to get woolly, and I had the impression that anybody looking at me would have thought I was bow-legged. The noise of the mob growing quieter as I left them behind was eerie. I wondered if I would get a bullet in my back before I reached the gates of the Annexe, but nothing happened.

When I reached my room again the floor was covered with revolvers, daggers and cartridge belts, and the rifles were stacked away in a corner. Poseidon, who had had his shoulder dislocated during the rescue of the French man, waved the arm that was not in a sling with a gesture Nelson might have envied.

"This must not be again, my captain," he said suavely. "Not at all, no. The pistols are now for you to say, for we to use."

As things seemed fairly quiet I thought we would make an attempt to get back our Overland car. One of the men in the Annexe who could drive volunteered to go with Robertson in the Sunbeam if he were allowed to wear one of the Red Cross armlets which the nurses had left behind. They drove to the office of the Commandant de la Place and demanded the return of the car which had been promised. The Commandant tore the Red Cross armlet off the driver's arm, called him a spy, and refused to give up the car. On their way back to the Annexe they saw Captain Maroudas, the former Chief of Police and the devoted friend of the Entente, being dragged off wounded to prison.

The firing in the streets was renewed all round. Presently seven Venizelist soldiers reached the Annexe and asked to be disguised. At noon a Cretan woman came in to say that the truce had been an excuse to wipe out all the Venizelists left in Athens, and that the Allies were sitting by and allowing the massacre. She was a fine tragic figure as she stood there, denouncing the betrayal of her friends.

Perhaps it was the emotion of listening to her stern utterance

which set everybody off again inside the Annexe. At any rate, a deputation begged me to obtain leave from Sir Francis Elliot to let them all take refuge at the back of the British Legation in the stables which were separated from it by the small garden. They said that by climbing over the wall which divided the Legation garden from the garden of the Annexe and by moving along under cover of the back of the wall of the Legation garden they could reach the stables without being fired on from the windows at the back. They declared that, though they had willingly given up their arms rather than see me go out again like that into Stadium Street, they no longer felt safe. I walked round to the Legation and asked Sir Francis if he was agreeable to this move. We went out together to inspect the stables and decided the best place for the refugees was a large wash-house on the second floor, the windows in which opened on the back of the Legation and were entirely hidden from the street beyond.

"The only condition I make is that nobody is to smoke," said Sir Francis.

We re-entered the Legation, whence some minutes later I walked out into the garden to see about ten of our men bent double running along the back of the wall toward the stable. Two more men were coming down a ladder on one side of the Annexe wall, and the venerable beard of old Vafiadis was just appearing above the wall on the Annexe side.

"Stop where you are, all of you," I shouted in a rage.

Everybody stopped instantly and remained in the attitude in which he had been at the moment I spoke. The most ridiculous figure of all was that of Vafiadis who, by this time, had got one leg over the wall and was sitting astride it. He was an Anglo-Greek who had served as long ago as 1873 as a trooper in a regiment of Yeomanry known as the Uxbridge Dragoons.

"Who gave you permission to leave the Annexe yet?" I asked. "Is this how you obeyed orders, Vafiadis, when you were a trooper in the British Army?"

"I am truly sorry, Major," said Vafiadis in his most courtly manner. "We have undoubtedly exceeded your instructions, Major."

It was the custom of this bearded patriarch to call me 'Major' in moments of stress.

I walked across to the stable door and harangued the frieze of trembling fugitives.

"I've a good mind to refuse to let you come in here after this piece of cowardly disobedience. However, I'm so disgusted with you all that I'd sooner you were out of my sight for the next few hours. Move on, then, and get inside."

The procession immediately started again like a film that goes on after a hitch, and in a few minutes I had quite a hundred and fifty men packed in that wash-house like sacks in a miller's loft. I had confiscated all their cigarettes and matches as they went in and I now left them huddled together in what they hoped was comparative safety. It was a relief to be quit of that atmosphere of panic.

About half an hour after this we heard that an armistice of three days had been formally declared and that all might be considered over; but as we had heard this time yesterday that all was over I did not feel much elation. However, Sir Courtauld Thomson came in presently in plain clothes to say that he had been walking about for the last hour and that things really did look quieter at last. He brought with him a large bunch of violets for which he declared he had had to pay an exorbitant price. Colonel Thomson's nonchalant manner almost persuaded us that order was restored; but he had hardly left the Annexe when Rogers arrived from the Piræus, and he told us that he had just seen a French soldier being dragged along by

the heels and kicked down Stadium Street, which did not sound exactly like an armistice. He also expressed nervousness about the turn events might take presently at the Piræus. Knoblock volunteered to go back in the Sunbeam with Rogers and get some food for our refugees, and having secured an escort of two Greek soldiers for him I let him go, because we were running very short of provisions, and the wretched men in the stables badly required food.

Knoblock had hardly left when a Venizelist officer in plain clothes came in to say that Venizelist houses were being sacked and looted everywhere.

Presently we heard that the house of Venizelos himself had been carried by assault after a stout defence by a few Cretan guards.

Sir Basil Thomson writes:

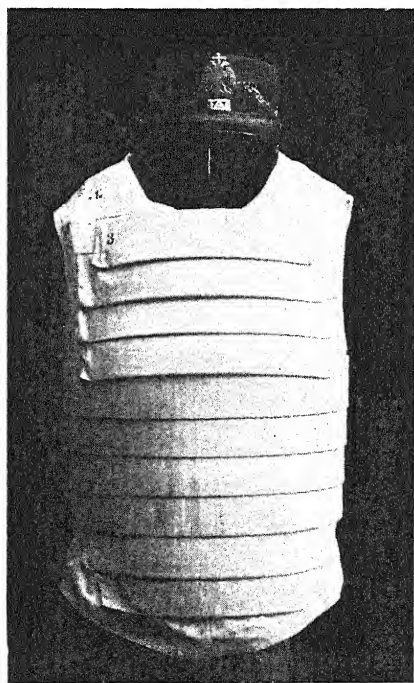
"After the bombardment, the houses of the Venizelist fugitives were searched, with the surprising result that a large quantity of rifles, bombs, and fuses, all of French army model, were discovered on the premises together with a steel bullet-proof garment which presumably Venizelos was to wear when the moment came for turning the arms and explosives against his fellow-countrymen." \*

This 'bullet-proof garment', if such a garment ever was really found, was probably a present from some devoted follower of Mr. Venizelos who wished to provide against assassination by his enemies. That assassination was repeatedly plotted, but none of the conspirators had the pluck to attempt it. I communicated the details of three plots myself, and on each occasion the conspirators fled from Athens. To make his readers' flesh creep Sir Basil Thomson gives them a photograph of the 'bullet-proof garment'. He obtained this from a mendacious pamphlet

\* *Allied Secret Service in Greece*, p. 189.



Cap with the double-headed eagle, probably a suggested badge for officers in the army of the Provisional Government, but published by the Royalists as a proof that Venizelos planned to make himself Emperor of Constantinople!



This is the bullet-proof cuirass alleged to have been found during the sack of the house of Venizelos



called *Le Guet-À-pens du 1er Décembre 1916 à Athènes*, published at Geneva by 'L Union Hellénique de Suisse', as Royalist propaganda. Among other things it professes to give a list of 162 agents of the Anglo-French police and their previous careers. Only fourteen out of this list were employed by ourselves, of whom nine were notified to and approved by the Greek Government. In every case but one the description of them appended is false. The one exception is Archondakis, of whom I wrote an account in the first chapter of this volume. I cannot positively affirm that none of the remaining one hundred and forty-eight was employed by the French, but with the exception of Paul Ghiparis, of whom mention has already been made, their names are unfamiliar to me.

The unscrupulous lies of propagandist pamphlets could be treated with silent contempt, but when an Englishman described as Director of Intelligence 1919-1921 trades upon his status to give currency to such lies it becomes necessary to expose the sources of his information, even though the contradiction of it flatters unduly its importance.

After the house of Venizelos had been overrun, the Grande Bretagne Hotel was at three o'clock attacked with machine-guns and rifles. Over sixty bullets were found inside the building later, three of them in Knoblock's bedroom. Fortunately none of the inmates was hurt. A riotous mob was now surging up and down Stadium Street, and from the balcony of the Annexe we could see Venizelist citizens being dragged off in every direction, kicked and beaten on the way. At half-past three I saw a Greek sailor climb on the roof of the house of Canelopoulos, a Venizelist tailor in Stadium Street, and shoot in the air. This was a signal for a heavy fusillade to be opened on the house of Canelopoulos and for suspected Venizelists in the street to be assaulted by the mob. Many bullets struck the Legation and the Annexe. Throughout these scenes of violence the Royalists



always excused their actions by asserting that they had been fired on from Venizelist houses. I was able to satisfy myself that in every case this was a deliberate lie and that every attack upon a Venizelist house or place of business was made by the Royalists without the slightest provocation.

The Director of Intelligence (1919-1921), if sincere, is as credulous as King Constantine himself who in the words \* of Sir Basil Thomson telegraphed to King George V that:

"There were irrefutable proofs in the hands of the Greek Government that the Venizelists, profiting from the Allied landing, intended to make themselves masters of the town and bring back M. Venizelos in triumph"; that two automobiles belonging to the Anglo-French Intelligence Service were "to give the order for revolt," and that the movement broke out at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Documentary support for this was found in a memorandum left behind by a French officer at the Zappeion containing the words: "At 2.30 the Reservists will concentrate at the Pnyx hill"—referring to the Venizelist Reservists who had been crowding into Athens.

"From the moon," he might have added without making this telegram much more absurd. We know that King Constantine's medicine-men played upon his superstitious fears; but Sir Basil Thomson does his memory a disservice by bringing forward evidence of the extent to which his mind was at the mercy of unscrupulous politicians and policemen.

After the attack on the house of Canelopoulos I went round to the Legation. In the Chancery was Colonel Fairholme, who had just cut his finger and was squeezing a lemon on it to stop its bleeding, his face a model of Teutonic stoicism. In the course of conversation some allusion was made to the refugees in the stables.

The shock this gave to Fairholme's nerves would have been comic if my own nerves had not been so jangled.

\* *Allied Secret Service in Greece.*

"You don't mean to tell me you've brought a lot of those ruffians of yours into the stables of the Legation?" he gasped. "I never heard of anything so disgraceful in my life. Do you realize you are exposing everybody in the Legation, including Lady Elliot and Miss Elliot, to the gravest danger?"

"There's less danger of our men being attacked now than when they were in the Annexe," I replied.

"Do you mean to say you have been housing those ruffians in the Annexe all this time?"

"What do you suppose I was going to do with them?" I asked. "Send them out into the street to be shot down? All these ruffians, as you call them, have been supplying you with the information you have been sending or should have been sending to the War Office, where if any attention had been paid to it they might have stopped this landing. Anyway, the precautions I take for the safety of my men are not your business, Colonel. I consulted Sir Francis, and he gave me permission to put them into the stables."

"Well, I shall see the Minister, and insist that every one of them is to be turned out at once."

With this Fairholme went fuming off to lodge his complaint. Sir Francis, of course, paid no attention to him, and nobody else in the Legation even hinted at the advisability of turning the men out into the street.

Knoblock came back from the Piræus about half-past five, loaded with bread and olives for the refugees. He reported all quiet down there, but said that there was an atmosphere of acute nervous strain, and that a very small spark would set the bonfire roaring. News had come in meanwhile that my own house had been looted. So Knoblock with Tucker and Giuseppe Mirabeta \* drove off to verify the truth of the report. The story of the visit to my house is best told in Knoblock's own words:

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 153, etc.

## GREEK MEMORIES

### REPORT ON INSPECTION OF CAPT. MACKENZIE'S HOUSE, BY MR. E. KNOBLOCK

"About six o'clock on Saturday afternoon, December 2nd, Captain Mackenzie asked me to go up to his house to see what condition it was in. He had heard all sorts of rumours of its being attacked and looted and consequently wished to find out if the report were true, so he sent across to the Commandant de la Place and got a safe conduct for Lieut. Tucker and myself and two Greek soldiers to escort us. We went in Capt. Mackenzie's motor and took with us his Greek servant. The house stands on the outskirts of the town just below a hill and there is a considerable dip in the road before one gets to it. On the way there we were stopped once by a patrol of soldiers who saw our pass, examined it, and let us go on.

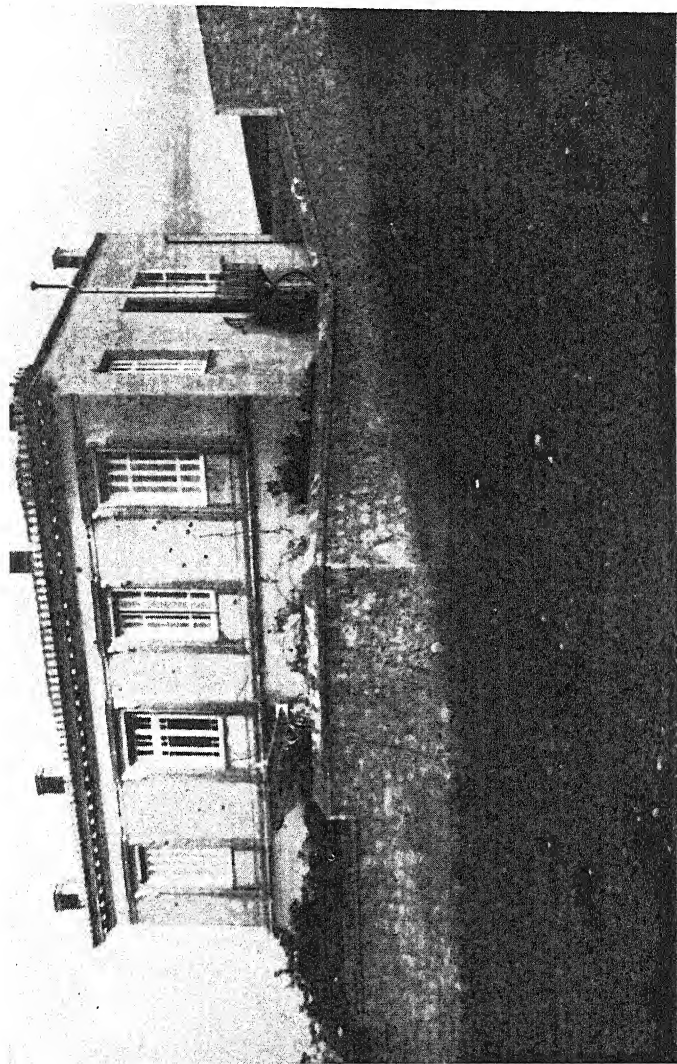
"When we reached the house it was dark. Lieut. Tucker and I went into it and as we entered the garden we saw signs of destruction; overturned flower-pots, the electric bell at the front door wrenched off and plaster lying about on the marble pavement, but as it was dark, one could not see very much of the outside condition of the house. It must be explained that there are two entrances, one at the front which is reached by a flight of stairs and one at the back (the servants' entrance) reached by a winding iron staircase, for Captain Mackenzie only occupied the first floor of the house, the ground floor being let to another tenant. We found the front entrance locked and consequently went upstairs by the winding staircase to the back door. Here we found the glass smashed to bits and the door half opened. I went in and found that the electric light in the kitchen was cut off, but managed to discover a candle. Directly I lit it I saw the kitchen in utter confusion. I then passed into the other rooms and found them all in the most terrible condition. There were bullet holes everywhere, through the windows at least twenty or thirty in each room. The place was

smashed beyond recognition, the cupboards were open, clothes dragged about the floor, the brushes and toilet articles either stolen or trampled to bits. In Captain Mackenzie's bedroom I picked up a bullet, which had spent its force in the dressing-table next to his bed, having first pierced the shutter of the window and an open drawer of the dressing-table. As it was dark and the place covered with plaster and glass, I thought it was absolutely useless to try to pack up things at that time of night and consequently decided to come back the next morning. So we got into the motor again and started driving back to the Legation.

"I have mentioned the dip in the road leading up to Capt. Mackenzie's house. Just as we reached the part turning into the main road beyond, we were stopped by a patrol of soldiers. We produced our passes but they began to shout and point their rifles at us. In less than a minute at least fifty soldiers came running from all directions shouting and brandishing weapons and pointing revolvers and rifles, although we had the two Greek soldiers in our motor acting as escort. The patrol dragged the soldiers from the car, wrenched their rifles from them, one soldier jumped up on the car and gave me a violent blow across the back. Finally we were forced out of the motor. A sergeant who seemed a little more intelligent than the rest tried to explain to the other soldiers that we had passes. After about two minutes a Lieutenant arrived to whom both Lieut. Tucker, who speaks Greek like a native, and the Greek servant explained that we belonged to the British Legation and had passes. This, however, was of no avail, and after about five minutes of shouting and arguing, the Lieutenant decided that we must be taken off to the Parapigmata Barracks. He therefore put about four of his own men upon the car, two or three others clinging to it behind, and drove off at a snail's pace, followed by men who had their rifles levelled at us. The barracks were about a thousand yards away on the main road. When we got there we

were at once taken to the officer in charge who saw our passes. He made his excuses to us and giving us a couple of marines allowed us after about half an hour's delay to return to the Legation. The explanation he gave us was that the soldiers were very excited at seeing us come out of Captain Mackenzie's house because shots had been fired in the morning from the balcony of the house and several soldiers wounded. Consequently, he said, the feelings of the soldiers were very much wrought up.

"I will explain this accusation at once by passing on to the next day when at 3 o'clock of the afternoon I went back to Captain Mackenzie's house. This time with a Greek officer and two soldiers and in broad daylight. On the ground floor of the house lived a tenant, who is an extremely intelligent old man, and he came upstairs as I was packing Capt. Mackenzie's things and explained to us exactly how the attack had been conducted. It seems that on the Friday morning (December 1st) a Greek sailor went up the back staircase and knocked at the door. As he did not get an answer, he forced open the door, went through the passage to the front of the house, stepped out on the balcony and fired a pistol shot into the air. This was the signal for soldiers standing about the house partly on the hill to the back of it and partly in the dip below to fire at the upper floor. They did their work so well that not a window was left whole in any of the rooms, and incidentally, they managed to wound the sailor who had given the signal. It appears that they then rushed into the house, followed by the populace and started looting, throwing the belongings of Capt. Mackenzie out of the windows. The Greek tenant who told us this said: 'It was as if all of them had gone mad.' They found a photograph of Venizelos presented by him to Capt. Mackenzie and ripped it from the wall and tore it to pieces with their teeth. Bottles, cigars, suits of clothes, boots, sheets, underwear, jewellery, helmets, were



My house after the attack of December 1st. The balcony mentioned in the text is on the side not shown, where the firing was much heavier.



flying through the windows and the whole neighbourhood seemed to have shared in this feast of destruction. What I packed up that afternoon was mostly odds and ends, and English books which obviously did not interest the quarter. The manuscript of a practically completed novel had been taken from a locked drawer, which was forced open. I could find no trace of it.

"The Greek tenant's testimony is of particular value as it proves the method adopted in almost every instance for attacking and destroying Venizelist houses. The same explanation was given for attacking the Hotel Grande Bretagne. The Greek officer who accompanied me on my second visit to Captain Mackenzie's house assured me that a Venizelist Lieutenant had fired from the second floor of the hotel. Evidently stories like this were spread among the soldiers to make them go from house to house to attack Venizelists.

"On the Sunday (3rd December) though things had quietened down considerably, it was still not an infrequent sight to see Venizelists being marched along the streets with their hands tied behind their backs, hooted and spat at by the crowd, and in one case one of the ladies of the office who is, if I may say so, particularly unimaginative, saw a wretched man being pushed along with his breast ripped open and bleeding. We also investigated several cases where people had been kicked and bitten by the crowd and had had their eyes gouged out when they were left to the mercy of the soldiers and police.

"We may mention that the firing was so universal and indiscriminate that one could not walk twenty yards without seeing bullet holes in some house. The Annexe had a considerable number of them, which had been made before the guards surrounded the house. Even the Legation had a large corner stone shot away, and this occurred after the Greek soldiers had come ostensibly to protect it from attacks."



It will be noted that my house was entered on Friday morning before anything happened at all, and the explanation of my incredulity over the accusations of aggressiveness made against Venizelists no longer needs stressing. I may add that the name of the sailor who broke into the house was Rangavopoulos, and that he was shot through the leg. The reason why the house was so much knocked about inside was that the foolish fellows were trying to discover the entrance to the secret passage by which they thought I had escaped them, for having, as they supposed, seen me enter the house the evening before, and having surrounded it completely all night they could not understand how I could have got out of it except by a secret passage. I still have as a souvenir of the occasion a pair of woollen socks which were shot to pieces inside a drawer.

The moment Knoblock returned with his first report, I sat down like a good Scotsman and wrote out a rough claim for an indemnity. The novel destroyed was called *No Papers* and it was the story in full of the girl in *Sylvia Scarlett* I called Queenie. I have also drawn her portrait in *Extremes Meet*. The total claim for the loss of this story, including the serial rights which had been bought by Harper Brothers, was £3,500. The British Commissioner on the Mixed Indemnity Claims Commission, which sat from 1917 to 1919, was Judge W. H. H. Thorne. In the summer of 1918 the sum of £4,000 was awarded to me by the Greek Government as indemnity.

Firing continued intermittently throughout Saturday night; but on the morning of Sunday, December 3rd, the city was calm, though there was a general feeling that disturbances would break out after the funeral of the Greek officers killed during the fighting.

Knoblock slept that night at the Grande Bretagne, whither he had gone late with a Greek escort, and he turned up in the morning with a cab full of bread and olives for the refugees in

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the stables. With him came a Greek lady who wanted to make arrangements with Sir Francis Elliot for her husband to escape from Greece. A copy of the letter she wrote was noted at the time:

*Dear Sir Francis:*

*After a horrid night passed under bullets, we are menaced to be killed; it was quite a miracle that we are saved. I asked an officer to remain on board the Provence and to send us on to Keratsini and from there to Salonica. Well, he refused in a most polite way. Please write to me what I must do and give us the means, that is passport for me and my husband for Salonica through the same way.*

*I'll get the letter through Bonnal, the French Consul. Kourmili and Foko were killing poor French soldiers that were passing behind the house.*

*Believe me,*

*Yours devoted,*

---

And then in a postscript that is an almost sublime example of business as usual:

*Saturday 2.xii.16.*

*Could you send in the meantime the permit of rice?*

Rumours were flying round all the morning as fast as bullets the day before. Count Bosdari was at the British Legation raising Cain with General Bousquier. The Legation was packing up and leaving at once. The Greeks intended to hold all foreigners as hostages and immediately join the Germans. The Venizelists had turned against us because we had failed to protect them. So one tale succeeded another. Nobody in the Legation had the least idea what was going to happen and there were no instructions of any kind from London.

That is now comprehensible enough, however strange it seemed to us at the time. The political chess-board in London was occupying all the attention. Lord Beaverbrook had found "Saturday an exhausting day" and "awoke feeling weary". There had been a leader that morning in *Reynold's* which nearly made the Conservative leaders give up to party what they were meaning for mankind, and Mr. Lloyd George, a pawn on the verge of queening, looked in danger of being swept off the seventh square. London being much too preoccupied to offer advice, let alone issue instructions, I decided to move first and ask where I was to go afterwards.

Syra in the middle of the Cyclades now seemed more than ever the right strategic point. Once established there I felt we could swing the rest of the Islands round to the Provisional Government. Moreover, in the event of war with Old Greece, Syra, where the evacuation of the enemy consulates offered us excellent quarters rent free, would be the ideal centre for obtaining Intelligence. I put this project before Sir Francis Elliot, and when he approved it I drafted out a letter to the Greek Prime Minister for him to sign, in which the Greek Government was called upon to provide our organization with transport to the Piræus and suitable escorts. I then telephoned down to Rogers to commandeer the steamer *Thessalia*, which had just unloaded at the Piræus, and ordered the staff to begin dismantling the offices of the Annexe at once. At my suggestion the Minister had already sent a telegram to Sir Cecil Thursby, the Vice-Admiral at Mudros, pointing out the advisability of an immediate naval occupation of Syra in order to protect our vitally important telegraphic communications in case of war, for Syra was the headquarters of the Eastern Telegraph Company. The Vice-Admiral replied that he could not spare a ship, and suggested occupation by the Venizelists. The Minister thereupon telegraphed to ask if a Venizelist torpedo-boat could

occupy the island. The reply to this was that the Greek light flotilla was under the control of the French.

The answer of the Greek Government to the proposal that I should leave Athens was the promptest ever received to any diplomatic Note sent in to them. Government lorries should be put at our disposal. Escorts should be provided for our men. A safe conduct should be accorded to myself, and a Greek officer of equal rank unarmed should accompany me in the Sunbeam from the Annexe to the Piræus as the Note requested.

When we started to pack up the French papers we discovered at the back of one of the cupboards four pineapple grenades. They had no doubt been brought here for defence when the Royalists began to store grenades and arms in their houses, and it is possible that some were given to Venizelists for protection, which would account for the rumours of vast stores of ammunition with which we were supposed to have filled the houses of the Venizelists all over Athens. At the same time, I doubt if there were half a dozen in the rest of Athens, for not even the Royalists ventured to suggest that any house they attacked was defended by hand grenades.

How I disposed of these grenades I cannot be sure now; but I am under the impression that after consultation with Sir Francis they were put in a small pond at the bottom of the Legation garden.

The Venizelist refugees were in a state of despair when they heard we were going to move. So I put them down on my list as agents, secured a Greek escort, and had them all marched down to the Piræus with a promise that I would take as many of them as I could in the *Thessalia*. This may partially account for the exaggerated number of agents attributed to us by the Royalists.

At four o'clock I left the Annexe in the Sunbeam accompanied by Tucker. The Greek captain unarmed sat in front

beside Robertson. Tucker and I sat at the back, both armed. We were stopped several times by patrols; but after the password was given and the safe-conduct shown we were allowed to proceed without obstruction. As we were driving round the curve of the small bay Castella beyond Phaleron, I heard my name shouted from a roof on the right, and looking up I saw about half a dozen Cretans with their rifles levelled at the Greek captain in the car.

"Come up here and join us, Captain Mackenzie," they shouted. "We will shoot that poor rat for you first, and then you will be free to spend your time up here with us."

I told Tucker to explain that we were not prisoners and that the Greek captain was a hostage for our safe conduct; but the Cretans lowered their rifles most reluctantly. I asked them how they came to be on the roof like this. They said that they had been on the way into Athens to protect the house of Venizelos, but had been driven back and compelled to take to the mountains, as they put it. They had been here since Friday afternoon, and boasted that they had kept Castella clear of traitors to Greece and stopped any attempt to repeat in the Piræus what had happened in Athens.

"We shot a few of them on their way down, and since yesterday not a Reservist has dared to pass this way."

"And what are you going to do now?" I asked.

"Oh, we shall soon be off to Salonica."

The Greek captain was shivering in the car during this colloquy. I told Robertson to drive on, waving the Cretans fortune and farewell. Those mountainy men had made the chimney-pots seem rocks and boulders and turned that suburban terrace into a precipice on Ida.

The Greek captain looked round, mopping his forehead, to express his gratitude for my intervention:

"I thought I was dead," he said with a sickly smile.

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It was lucky that Tucker was with me, for my own Greek might not have availed to explain the situation.

A few minutes later we reached the quayside at the Piræus and went on board the *Thessalia*.

I had had to leave to Knoblock the superhuman task of getting all our papers, codes, safes, furniture, and office-equipment down to the Piræus, and I cannot pay his energy a better tribute than by quoting his own notes jotted down at the time. E.K. stands for Knoblock and Z for myself:

Sunday, Dec. 3. 5 o'clock.

*Returned to Legation with loaded car of Z's belongings, or what remained of them, and proceeded to Piræus in Sunbeam followed by lorry loaded with French papers. Patrols everywhere on the road and officers giving passwords. On way back from Piræus with officer E.K. spoke to him in French. Greek officer says Venizelists are to blame. They shot out of windows of the Grande Bretagne and other houses. This tale was universally spread. E.K. returned to the Legation. Many refugees on the Piræus road with furniture, luggage, etc. Streets much calmer that evening. No demonstrations. Dinner at Legation. Everybody wonders whether the Entente will declare war on Greece. They say the French Admiral is to be recalled.*

Monday, December 4th, 1916.

*Streets calmer, but processions marching about at intervals pushing along Venizelist prisoners, jeered and spat at by the crowd. Lorry leaves Annexe with first load of documents, etc. Our agents are marched off with Maclure and a Greek guard protecting them. They go to Piræus. E.K. off again to Piræus with money and codes in Admiral Palmer's\* motor-car. Second motor-lorry breaks down. E.K. back to Athens by train. Arrange for another lorry. Go down to Piræus with it at 8.30.*

\* Chief of the British Naval Mission in succession to Admiral Kerr.

## GREEK MEMORIES

No one knows what the policy will be. At Legation in the afternoon a big Roumanian victory is announced which affects the German victories in the Balkans. Greek Sergeant on the motor-lorry tells E.K. "that the King loves Greece, that Venizelos is to blame, that there is a universal feeling against the French." There is again a talk of massacring all Venizelists at Piræus, and also a talk of more troops landing. Meanwhile, the French troops have been withdrawn from Athens to Piræus. Monday night stayed on board the Thessalia.

Tuesday, December 5th, 1916.

Athens much calmer. Everyone about the streets—people quite calm again. Squares open to traffic, but soldiers at the corner keeping guard. E.K. goes with Col. Sir Courtauld Thomson to Athens hospital to visit wounded. Three French Marines badly wounded, fifty-three Greeks wounded. Rocks about the Acropolis occupied by soldiers. Hotel Grande Bretagne deserted. Impression everywhere fear of war. Reports of more Venizelists being run in, one with his breast torn to pieces. At Legation Bridgeman says strong action to be taken at home. (A little late.) French Admiral has proved himself utterly incompetent.\* Legation packing up and burning papers. Talk of Allies bombarding Athens. Situation seems in a hopeless tangle. E.K. returns to Piræus.

A note from Bonaparte to Zanardi supplements Knoblock's jottings:

Monday.

Dear Cavour :

I came down to Piræus this morning at noon and volunteered to replace Tucker for one trip with the lorrie. We arrived at the Annexe at 2 p.m. and the officer driving the lorrie informed me that he would be back at 4 p.m. At 4 p.m. all the agents and

\* Admiral Dartige du Fournet was recalled and put on the retired list. To mark their appreciation of his services the British Government gave him a G.C.B.

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*Maclure marched down and I was left alone at the Annexe with four men engaged from the Omonia as 'hamals'. In the meantime I shifted the wounded porter to our Legation. Darkness set in. I went twice to the Legation and informed Mr. Bridgeman and Mr. W. Lafontaine to ask the Government to hurry up the lorrie to the Annexe. Rain started—the men waiting at the Annexe to load the lorrie threatened to leave. I 'phoned to Captain Rogers and Tucker informed me to go to the Legation. I saw Mr. Bridgeman and he told me that he had informed the 'Flurarchion' and that he doubted whether the lorrie would come and the best thing for me was to go down as soon as possible. I took the train and came down and Capt. Zed will tell you the rest.*

*I am here on board the "Astrapi" and I am without food from the morning; no accommodation available and the craft is full of people.*

*I shall go to Athens to-morrow morning at 7.30 and go to the Annexe. Please let me know what time the lorrie will come to the Legation; and at the same time let me know if I can go ashore and get some food.*

*Please answer.*

*Best regards.*

*Bonaparte.*

And a characteristic letter from Davy Jones is worth preserving:

S.S. MARIENBAD.

Sunday evening.

*Captain Compton Mackenzie:*

*I am on board "Marienbad" after being watched by the Greek police at Piræus, who came and asked for me to catch me at the first moment, if the revolutionaries should come to Piræus. So the proprietor of the hotel told me all, and then I went away.*

*As soon as I came aboard the "Marienbad" I saw Mr. Ch—*



on board, the secret man of Dousmanis, you must remember him ; he was coming to the German Legation, and had relations with Grancy. If you will remember well, he was a very interesting man, and I was very much surprised to find him on "*Marienbad*". I cannot trust him. Think of it, please, because he is on board for several days. I found Mr. Robert—and Mr. Lafon—to whom I told everything and they have gone to Mr. Kakoulides and told him everything, and he told us it is all right. But I am very much afraid lest he makes signs or something else to the boats.

My house is destroyed. I have nothing now and I wear only the clothes I had on, I as well as my wife.

Davy Jones.

Meanwhile, I was having my own troubles in the *Thessalia*. I cannot hope to describe the confusion of that vessel with one hundred and eight members of our Service, their wives, children, and various friends and feminine relations, to which were added about one hundred and fifty panic-stricken refugees of mixed age and sex. The harbour front of the Piræus looked as if the Turk had invaded Greece, such a collection of barrows was there loaded with household belongings of the crowds of despondent Venizelist refugees that were hoping to get on board a ship and escape from Athens. The big liner, *King Constantine* (*Vassilefs Constantinos*), a 14,000-ton vessel, was occupied by the British residents of Athens and their families. Besides the *Thessalia* Rogers had commandeered the *Astrapi* for the overflow. I had Tucker on board to help me. Braggiotti was at the Annexe with Knoblock, Kenny Whittall was helping Rogers till the last moment in the Port Control Office.

No sooner was everybody safely on board than a fresh panic broke out at the prospect of crossing the Ægean. Sir Francis had promised to ask Admiral Hayes Sadler for a destroyer's escort as far as Syra, and it was a relief to hear that this request had been

granted, for otherwise I doubt if I could have persuaded the crew to sail.

On Tuesday afternoon, December 5th, when I hoped that at last all our troubles were at an end and that we should get away punctually, the crew of the *Thessalia* now refused to sail because there were not enough lifebelts on board. It only required this behaviour on the part of the crew to set all the passengers into a panic again. They started moaning, wailing, and wringing their hands, and for a quarter of an hour the ship was like Bedlam. The crew were sulking in the engine-room. By this time, feeling completely exasperated I pulled out a pistol and ordered them to get steam up, whereupon they pointed out with irrefragable logic that even if I shot them all I should still be just as far away as ever from leaving the Piræus. So I put the pistol back in the holster and promised the men I would find some lifebelts if they would get on with the preliminaries for sailing. Tucker, Hiscock and I with two or three men set off in the ship's cutter to board the *King Constantine*, where I hoped to beg, borrow or steal the lifebelts.

I have not mentioned Hiscock yet. He had been one of the clerks in Cook's office at Athens, and had been engaged from there as messenger between Athens and Alexandria much against my will, for he was a most capable young man and I considered his abilities wasted on carrying correspondence when he might have been doing responsible work at the Annexe. When the necessity for finding Greek-speaking officers for the Controls became paramount, Hiscock was given a General Service commission as Second Lieutenant; and, though Rogers made a strong effort to keep him in the Port Control Office at the Piræus, I secured his services by temporarily leaving Maclure behind with Rogers, and for the time being Kenny Whittall as well.

When we reached the *King Constantine* I went up the port

gangway and engaged the captain in conversation while Tucker and the others flung as many of the lifebelts over the starboard side into the cutter as it would hold. Then, while they were rowing back to the *Thessalia*, I asked the captain if he would lend us fifty lifebelts, as he was likely to be at the Piræus for some time yet and it was vital for the *Thessalia* to proceed before dusk. In the end, between those we had begged and those we had borrowed, we were able to add over a hundred lifebelts to the ones already on the *Thessalia*. The skipper of the destroyer was getting very impatient over the delay in starting; but I went up in the bows and appeased his wrath through a megaphone until at last we got under way. Just as we reached the boom a signal was made to stop. There was a car on the quay. I was rowed ashore to find Sells waiting for me.

"The Minister has just had a telegram from Syra, lad, to say you may not find things so quiet there as you hoped."

"He doesn't want me to stop here any longer?"

"No, he leaves it to you," said Sells, "but he thought you ought to know, so that you wouldn't land without taking precautions."

"It can't be worse in Syra than it is here, and I simply cannot stand this hysterical mob on my hands much longer. So I think we'll tackle Syra."

"I think you're wise. Well, so long, lad, and good luck."

I jumped into the cutter and was pulled off to the *Thessalia*. Looking back I could see Sells in his blue boat-cloak driving back to Athens with Markham, whom we had left behind with the battered Overland for the use of the Legation. We took Robertson and the Sunbeam with us to Syra. I had just reached the *Thessalia* and was hearing with infinite relief the noise of the screws when somebody shouted that a motor-boat was coming toward us at full speed across the harbour, in which a man was standing up and frantically waving.

"We can't wait any longer, sir," one of the officers of the destroyer was shouting through a megaphone.

"Only two more minutes, sir," I shouted back. "I must hear what this motor-boat wants."

The motor-boat drew alongside, and I saw the dark features of Steevens, the Athens correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*.

"Will you be kind enough to post my dispatches in Syra?" he asked. "I can't get them off here on account of the censorship."

"No, by ——, I won't post your —— dispatches! Do you mean to say you've had the —— nerve to stop this ship for your . . . . . ." but then I remembered that Jeffries, the *Daily Mail* correspondent, was on board the *Thessalia*, hoping for more excitement at Syra. It would not be fair to refuse the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* our help. "All right, throw them aboard," I said. "I'll post them, confound you."

That was the last I saw of poor Steevens. He was killed in London the next autumn by the Zeppelin bomb which was dropped in Tottenham Court Road.

As we left the land behind us a fine rain came on and there was a ground swell which made the *Thessalia* roll unpleasantly, for she was steaming in ballast only and riding very high in the water. Every time a chain rattled or a block creaked the women would scream and the children would cry and the men would run hither and thither yelling: "Submarine! Submarine!"

It was dark when we left. I ordered everybody below, and I sat on the deck wrapped in rugs, with a pistol on either side of me. We were so high in the water that a sudden rush of passengers to the side might easily have made the ship turn turtle, and I had to announce that I would shoot the first man who put his head up a hatchway. I felt lonely and depressed sitting up on deck. It continued to drizzle all through the night, and the mournful grey glimmer of the obscured moon

added to the solitude and sadness. Although my nerves were strung up beyond the point of sea-sickness, I was grateful for the absence of wind. Many pages might be taken up with my reflections during that solitary watch through the drizzling night as the *Thessalia* rolled on eastward across the ninety miles of sea to Syra; but gradually the determination not to be beaten conquered, and from repining over the past I began to plan a counterstroke to the events of the last few days. Once I must have dozed, for suddenly I saw the bulk of Tsitsopoulos covered with lifebelts and looking in the dim moonlight like the ghost of Hamlet's father on the battlements of Elsinore.

"What the devil are you doing up here against my orders? Come away from that rail at once."

"It is not a submarine, is it, *signor capitano*?" my fat doctor inquired anxiously.

I flung aside the sodden rugs and leapt up.

"If you appear on deck again," I said, "I'll send you back to Athens and disown you. Can't you understand that ship in front of us is a destroyer?"

Tsitsopoulos retreated hastily, and nobody else came on deck until at half-past four we dropped anchor off Syra in the first grey of dawn. I saw the twin hills each crowned with a church, as fantastic seeming as the mountains of the moon, and then to my indescribable relief I made out the shape of a cruiser and knew that the Vice-Admiral had thought better of his refusal to send a ship to Syra.

#### COLLECTING ISLANDS

I had intended to bring this volume of memories to an end at this point and reserve the story of the occupation of Syra for the beginning of *Ægean Memories*. However, on consideration, I think it will be better to carry the narrative up to the end of 1916. The key and the time for the tale of our *Ægean*

adventures in 1917 will be so different from the present volume that the sense of urgency which has haunted my pen throughout these pages will be out of keeping and is better gratified now.

At seven o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, December 6th, we passed through the nets, and as soon as possible I was rowed off to the *Edgar* in order to report to Captain Clifton Brown,\* who, happily for my notions of what ought to be done, turned out to be a genial and receptive man of action. Like nearly everybody in the Ægean Squadron he had the welfare of the Provisional Government at heart and was not afraid of initiative. He had been S.N.O. at Suda Bay for a time and was on his way to do what he called 'a little shooting' along the Macedonian coast when the Vice-Admiral had signalled for him to stop for the present at Syra.

The first move that suggested itself was an interview with the leading Venizelists in Syra. They were summoned on board the *Thessalia*, and at a council of war held in the saloon it was decided to arrest and deport at once the leading Royalists on the island. The Nomarch, or Prefect, the Judge, the Public Prosecutor, the Chief Wireless Operator, the Director of the Commercial School, and two of the leading merchants were invited on board the *Edgar* and there made as comfortable as possible until they could be taken to Salonica to have their future settled by the officials of the Provisional Government.

Commander Cottrell,† who had formerly been Superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company's station on Syra, and who was now chief censor at Mudros, had arrived and had already taken charge of the telegraphic censorship. A French Officer, who had been sent by Commandant Clergeau to work temporarily at Syra until British telegraphic control was instituted there under the terms of the partition of Controls, just

\* Vice-Admiral F. Clifton Brown, C.B., C.M.G.

† The late Captain W. H. Cottrell, C.M.G., O.B.E., R.N.V.R.

concluded when the futile ultimatum broke everything up, at once placed himself at my disposition, and I put him under Commander Cottrell's orders until the future of Controls was settled again.

We had the luck to find besides a receptive S.N.O. a receptive Consul. The Consul at Syra is what is called a trading consul, and the post is always held by the Superintendent of the Eastern Telegraph Company's big station. No more lovable man than Consul Hastings\* ever lived. The whole time I was in the Cyclades we worked together in unbroken accord. There would have been innumerable opportunities for one who was looking for trouble to find it. Hastings always helped actively and never hindered even passively. He was a largish, slow-moving, slow-speaking, bearded man with a splendid sense of humour and a fine hospitality.

The job of housing everybody in Syra can be imagined. Knoblock deserves most of the credit for that. He was indefatigable, and by nightfall we had all the junior members of the Staff with their families safe in lodgings ashore. The wounded porter was put in sick bay in the *Edgar*, where he made rapid progress. We remained on board the *Thessalia* ourselves that first night, but we were continually being disturbed to settle something or other, and early on the morning of December 7th we took our papers ashore to establish the Military Control Office and Intelligence Bureau in the Austrian Consulate. At the old German Consulate a censorship of parcels and letters was established under Tucker, who had his private quarters there as well. Knoblock and I occupied the Turkish Consulate with the idea of converting it as soon as possible from a residential

\* I owe an apology to the late Mr. H. F. Hastings for giving him the wrong initials in *Athenian Memories*. And I may take this opportunity to correct a misstatement. The *Goeben* and the *Breslau* did not coal at Syra in August, 1914, but at the island of Dinusa, about sixty miles to the eastward, with which there was no telegraphic communication.

mess into a residential Mess. It was situated above the town with a classic view of blue sea and islands. But I shall not take up space in this volume with premature descriptions of places and houses we had no leisure to appreciate at the time.

This seems the moment to extract a few words from the report I sent to London of events in Athens :

*In connexion with the above report I want particularly to mention Miss Chapman, Miss Gorkiewicz, Miss Cook, and Miss Rondaki who whether in going out to obtain food, in nursing our wounded porter or in carrying on with their work set an example of devotion which I am proud to have witnessed.*

*Mr. Edward Knoblock, for acting throughout as my second in command with the utmost courage, tenacity, and judgment.*

*The agents and porters, Zammit, wounded in the arm, Poseidon who had an arm dislocated, Manoussaki shot through the lungs, and Venieris, for their gallant rescue of the French soldier.*

*Lieut. Rogers, R.N.R., for his handling of the situation at the Piræus.*

*Corporal Robertson, A.S.C., and Mr. Markham for the many times they drove their cars under heavy fire.*

*Nearly everybody behaved with coolness in a somewhat trying situation, but I feel bound to mention particularly the above names.*

Although we had secured the leading Royalist residence of Syra so easily, I knew that there would be no chance of a peaceful occupation of Syra so long as the active and influential personality of that stout-hearted Royalist Colonel Deleres was at large, and I decided that a *coup de main* quickly executed was the only way of avoiding future trouble. Naxos, where the Colonel lived, is the largest island of the Cyclades and owing to the number of Catholics there it was the least friendly toward the Entente. Knowing how hopeless it would be to attempt to



control Naxos so long as the Colonel was free to lead the resistance, I asked Captain Clifton Brown if he would put a drifter at our disposal that night for an expedition. He agreed to do so, and I picked fifteen reliable men under one of my subalterns, who had got away from Patras, to surprise Naxos three hours away to the south-east. It was a drenching night; but the moon, though heavily obscured, was about full and would light the party on their way. Jeffries asked if he could accompany the expedition, which left Syra about eleven o'clock. All was still in Naxos when they arrived, for from the moment of the *Thessalia's* arrival not a breath of news from Syra had reached any other island or the mainland itself. I forgot to mention that one of our first steps had been to institute a patrol of the sea-board with coastguards chosen from our agents and thus stop any signalling.

Our men walked quickly up through the narrow white streets in the drenched moonshine, hearing no sound except the barking of the many dogs. They soon forced the door of the Colonel's house. Four of them ran up to his bedroom, seized him, wrapped him in his own blankets, and carried him down to the drifter. The operation had been executed so successfully that it was decided to spend a few more minutes in wrapping up the Demarch or Mayor in his blankets and carrying him away as a companion for the Colonel. Not a single person was encountered, and by 2.30 a.m. the barking of the Naxos dogs had died away behind the drifter steaming back to Syra.

The next day I formally notified the Chief of Police at Syra, the Harbour Master, and the Sub-Directors of Posts and Telegraphs that a British Control had been established over the Cyclades.

Both the Friday and Saturday were taken up in straightening out the office and getting it into working order; but in this labour I was not of much assistance, for on Friday afternoon

when I sat down at my desk to write a report of recent events I fell asleep and did not wake until about eight o'clock that night, feeling very cross with everybody for letting me sprawl asleep over a desk for five hours. I seem to remember that it was Miss Chapman who bore the brunt of my indignation, which she sustained with perfect equanimity.

I have an impression that Hope-Johnstone reported on the Saturday from Corfu, bringing with him in a kit-bag a few clothes, one top-boot, several works on Higher Mathematics, the two volumes of Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, a camera, and a flute; but Hope-Johnstone was to be a comfort and a joy for many weeks to come. He shall be expanded in the final volume.

I decided that the first island on which we would impose Control should be Tenos, partly because it was the nearest to Syra, and partly because owing to the Catholic majority I anticipated a certain amount of trouble there. In view of these frequent reflections on the attitude of my co-religionists I should mention that these Catholic populations in the Cyclades were survivals of the Venetian domination of the *Ægean* and that, although for a while French protection had been granted to them, of recent years they had depended on the benevolence of Austria. King Constantine's loyalty to Germany secured their allegiance, to which was added the Catholic preference for monarchy. I thought Braggiotti, who was a Catholic himself, would be the most suitable officer for Tenos. I sent with him Hiscock, Picktor, and a staff of twenty with orders that when Tenos was quiet Hiscock was to establish Control in Andros, a large island west of Tenos, the people of which were unanimously Venizelist owing to the shipping interest. Picktor, after getting some practice at Tenos, was to move on to Naxos and establish the control there.

I heard Mass on December 10th at one of the Catholic churches in Syra, and in the afternoon I interviewed the Catholic

Bishop and urged him to use his influence to keep his flock from misbehaving themselves.

During the evening there was some revolver firing from the Catholic quarter, and a few disturbances in cafés, but nothing serious enough to call for drastic action. The following evening at about six o'clock news came that a rifle had been smuggled into a sweetshop almost opposite the Military Control Office, and as I had given orders immediately after landing that all fire-arms in Syra were to be handed over to the Chief of Police, who had been made personally responsible for any disturbance, I at once sent for him. With his second-in-command he came along promptly to the old Austrian Consulate. I suggested that the best remedy for minor disturbances was the institution of mixed patrols of bluejackets and gendarmes. The Chief of Police demurred to this at first, but when Tucker came back from the sweetshop with the confiscated rifle he agreed to the plan of mixed patrols, to carry out which I had of course already secured the approval of Captain Clifton Brown.

This business having been satisfactorily arranged, the two heads of the police departed, and their place was taken by a deputation of leading Venizelists, both residents and refugees, who came to ask my help in re-establishing the *Patris*, which, with every other Venizelist newspaper, had been suppressed in Athens. I had already forbidden publication to the Royalist newspaper in Syra, and affixed seals to the printing press. The sub-editor of the *Patris* was in Syra, a most capable little fellow full of enthusiasm. Finally, I sent a telegram to Mr. Venizelos, through Consul-General Wratislaw in Salonica, asking him to give his approval to the project of publishing a Venizelist newspaper in Syra. Mr. Wratislaw, without taking the trouble to find out what the position was in Syra, did not pass on this message to Mr. Venizelos and telegraphed to Consul Hastings that I had no executive authority, though how he supposed I

was occupying Syra without executive authority is one of those curiosities of intelligence which so frequently baffle us in observing the workings of the consular mind. Mr. Wratislaw had been involved on several occasions with the E.M.S.I.B. in Salonica; but that was no excuse for trying to play the mandarin in Syra.

Dr. Alivisatos, a leading Athenian physician originally from Cephalonia, who had taken refuge in Syra, expressed on behalf of his fellow Venizelists grave apprehensions about the behaviour of the police when the time came for Venizelist troops to land and formally declare the Provisional Government of National Defence supreme in Syra.

"They have arms up at the police station, and the Chief of Police has expressed his determination to hold out to the last," Dr. Alivisatos declared. "No doubt that resistance will be overcome, but we are most anxious to avoid bloodshed, and we count on you, Captain Mackenzie, to take steps to paralyse all opposition before the troops land."

"Count on me?" I exclaimed. "But how am I to effect without bloodshed what cannot be effected by Venizelist troops?"

I can see now the expression on the doctor's face, and the gesture he made as he replied:

"Oh, you will find a way. We all of us have implicit confidence in you."

There was a murmur of assent from the members of the deputation, and with bows they withdrew.

Early on the morning of December 12th Captain Clifton Brown informed me that the Venizelist troops of occupation were expected to arrive at midday, and he authorized me to do everything possible to secure the four chief Officers of Police beforehand. It was one of the wettest days I remember, a steady drench of unrelenting rain. I went back to the office and wrote

## GREEK MEMORIES

to ask the Chief of Police if he would be kind enough to come down to the old Austrian Consulate and bring with him his three subordinate officers to discuss the details of the mixed patrols, upon the advantage of which we had already agreed the previous evening. At the same time I sent a letter to the President of the Reservists' League and expressed a desire to speak to him, giving orders that immediately he reached the old Austrian Consulate he was to be detained.

I talked about the mixed patrols to the Chief of Police and his subordinate officers in my own office, and finally I asked him if he would send for eight of his men so that they could be shown exactly what was required of them. I then asked if Tucker and I could speak confidentially to the Chief of Police and his second-in-command. The two juniors were dismissed, and as soon as they reached the main office on their way out their pistols were taken away from them, and they were asked to go downstairs into the kitchen. After allowing a minute or two for this operation I winked at Tucker who, as I slipped the pistol out of the holster of the Chief of Police, quickly snatched the pistol from the second-in-command.

"What does this mean?" the Chief of Police demanded.

"It means," I said, with a bow, "an undesired discourtesy on my part which I much regret and which I should only have used in order to prevent something worse than discourtesy when at noon troops of the Provisional Government under Colonel Calomenopoulos will arrive from Mytilene to occupy Syra. Tucker, will you show these two gentlemen down to the kitchen?"

A few minutes later the eight policemen who had been sent for by their Chief arrived at the Consulate with their arms and equipment. The front of the house was sheltered by a conservatory in which six men were asked to wait while two went in. As the two entered the passage from the front-door their rifles

were taken away from them by men lined up along each side of it, and the men themselves taken down into the kitchen. When we had secured the first eight in this manner I sent a messenger up to the barracks to say that the Chief of Police wanted another eight men with their arms and equipment. These were disarmed in the same way and locked up in the kitchen like their predecessors, and by midday we had disarmed and imprisoned thirty-six of Syra's police and their four officers. In addition to that the President of the Reservists' League had been persuaded to write a letter forbidding any resistance.

Satisfied with the morning's work, I hurried down through the rain to the quay where two hundred soldiers and a hundred Cretan gendarmes were disembarking. They had had a rough voyage from Mytilene, and their faces were all pea-green, that of Colonel Calomenopoulos being the greenest of the lot. However, he quickly recovered when his feet were on terra firma again, and I asked him to come along at once and deal with the forty police locked up in our kitchen. He said he thought they would be in a more receptive mood later in the afternoon, and suggested a visit at five o'clock. I fancy the Colonel thought he would be in a more receptive mood himself by then. Certainly when he came along at five o'clock he looked a very different creature from the pea-green, unshaven, be-draggled colonel I had seen standing in that drench of rain on the quay.

After delivering a preliminary oration on patriotism Colonel Calomenopoulos spoke to each of the police in turn and offered them the opportunity of taking the oath of fealty to the Provisional Government. It was like the game of Oranges and Lemons. Those who declared for the Provisional Government were embraced and sent upstairs to the drawing-room; those who declined were kept in the kitchen. Three of the officers remained faithful to the King, and one went over to the

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Provisional Government. Of the men about half elected for one side and half for the other. Those who adhered were incorporated in the troops of occupation.

In the great square of Syra, a beautiful piazza paved with marble, the adherence of the island to the Provisional Government of National Defence was solemnly proclaimed. Colonel Calomenopoulos made an oration. The new Nomarch or Prefect, M. Vassalikaki, a bright, intelligent little man, said a few words. Captain Clifton Brown grinned benignly. The crowd cheered. For myself I remember best the immobile faces of the Cretan gendarmes under their round caps of astrakhan, standing rigid with presented arms, for in that immobility was to be discerned most clearly of all the indomitable spirit of Hellas.

We had now to set to work to link up the many other islands in the Cyclades with Syra. Beyond that, there was the increasingly difficult problem of coping with the influx of Venizelist refugees from the mainland, many of whom were without any means of sustenance at all. Captain Clifton Brown commandeered the *Thessalia* to distribute as many of them as possible among the other islands. The distribution of flour, too, was a problem, for it was up to us to see that the islands were fed during the blockade of the mainland. Another problem was the irregularity and difficulty of postal communication with Athens. This telegram was received on December 14th:

*From Sir Francis Elliot.*

CIRCULAR  
to all Consuls.

*In view of possible rupture of diplomatic relations with Greece you should send me no correspondence in writing until further orders and correspond only with Foreign Office, Military and Naval authorities and Egyptian (?) by safe opportunity.*

DECEMBER

Sir Francis Elliot  
to  
Consul Hastings.

*My circular telegram of to-day, cessation  
of correspondence. Please ask Captain  
Mackenzie if he can communicate substance  
to Vice-Consul at Samos in his cipher.*

My own great lack was efficient officers to administer the various islands. People like Bonaparte were not suitable for that. Knoblock and Tucker were indispensable in Syra. Kenny Whittall had the whole administration of the port of Syra to deal with. In the three largest islands, Tenos, Naxos, and Andros, British representatives were essential. Braggiotti in Tenos was good, though fussy; Hiscock in Andros was excellent; but it soon looked as if Picktor was going to find Naxos too much for him. I telegraphed urgently to the Piræus for Maclure, but Rogers replied from the Port Control Office there that he could not spare him. Hope-Johnstone was required in Syra to help in organizing the espionage that would be necessary if, as was now looking more than probable, war broke out between the Entente and Old Greece.

C was responding nobly to my demand for officers, and one by one they were being sent out to Syra; but they could not arrive during that last fortnight of December when it was imperative to get the Controls fully established before the possible outbreak of hostilities with Old Greece.

Fortunately, W.H. turned up from Volo, bringing with him a remarkable report on the efforts being made by the Royalist Army to accumulate grain for the campaign in view. He would not stay into the New Year, but while he was with us I was able to make full use of his vigour, initiative, and dominating personality. The trickiest island was Naxos; the main source of trouble was proving to be the villages in the mountainous hinterland, the inhabitants of which had always behaved like brigands and had for years kept the town of Naxos at the mercy



of their insolence. The chief offender was the village of Apeiranthos where the workers in the emery mines lived. Their village was a natural fortress high up in the mountains and overhanging the sea. The streets were tunnels, and the houses loopholed like towers. Arms and ammunition were there in plenty, and besides them a store of dynamite. The inhabitants were Cretans who had been living there for two hundred years. They still wore their old national costume of blue piped with crimson and set off by a tasselled crimson cap and a crimson sash. The men were all tall, dark and handsome, and they had a most profound contempt for the rest of Naxos. The result was that when flour was sent over to Naxos town the Apeiranthiotes threatened to seize it for themselves. Not being able from Picktor's telegrams and reports to arrive at what really was happening in Naxos, I sent W.H. to find out. Accompanied only by a guide, he walked all the way up to Apeiranthos, and though at first the natives looked like resorting to violence they were finally charmed by his manner into friendliness. They said they had no objection to the British, or for that matter even to joining the British Empire, because the Greek Government owed them 200,000 drachmas. This debt must have been claimed in connexion with the emery mines. They strongly objected, however, to the Provisional Government, having no desire to go to war. When W.H. pointed out that at the present moment it looked as if King Constantine was intending to go to war against the Entente the Apeiranthiotes stopped cheering for King Constantine and cheered for King George instead.

"We will have nothing more to do with King Constantine now," they declared.

"But you must be for either King Constantine or Venizelos," W.H. pointed out. "You must submit to be ruled by one or the other."

"Not at all," the Apeiranthiotes replied. "There is no reason why we should be ruled by anybody except ourselves."

After this visit they behaved well for a time; but unfortunately the lieutenant in charge of the detachment of Venizelist troops upset them again by his provocative behaviour, and the end of the matter was that the Venizelists attempted to take the village by storm. Finding that they were incapable of doing this, they called for the help of the trawler that was lying in the little harbour below. The skipper of the trawler misunderstood his instructions from the S.N.O. and opened fire, with the result that several of the Apeiranthiotes were killed. The whole business was lamentably muddled. Much was made of this Apeiranthos 'massacre' by the Royalist propagandists. The number of men, women and children killed was said by some to be over three hundred. As the matter was a naval one I never had the exact figures, but the dead and wounded certainly did not exceed twenty. I was thankful indeed that none of my own officers or men was even indirectly involved in this deplorable business. If only W.H. could have remained to administer Naxos, within a week or two it would undoubtedly have been completely tranquil without so much as a pistol shot.

Braggiotti at Tenos had a difficult task at first; but as a Catholic he was able to establish cordial relations with the Bishop and the most influential priests, and I was able to persuade the Venizelist authorities to let us try our hand at adjusting matters before they sent over any troops. It was made clear that no more flour would be sent to the Island without guarantees of good behaviour, and gradually Tenos settled down to perfect calm.

Before he left the Cyclades W.H. was called upon to accomplish another task. Word was received in Syra that the four chief police officers of Tenos had escaped to Andros carrying with them over 30,000 drachmas of public money. They were

reported to be making for Gavrium at the west end of Andros in order to wait there for a chance of getting a caique to cross with them to the mainland. Thinking it would lower our prestige if they were successful, I sent W.H. with Tucker and six men to make an attempt to cut them off. Alas, I no longer possess W.H.'s own report of the exploit, which read like a fairy tale, or any notes, so I must rely on my memory to record what I can remember of the adventure.

After a forced march of over twenty miles across a mountainous island in mid-winter, the expedition reached Gavrium to learn that the wanted men were not there. They were reported to be probably in a monastery up in the hills above the little port. As I remember, the walk up through the December darkness was more than laborious, and Tucker came back from the expedition perceptibly thinner. After a tramp of some hours they reached the outer gate of the monastery round about midnight, and rang the great iron bell. For long there was no response; but they rang again and again until at last footsteps were heard shuffling along toward the great door in the outer wall. The latch of the grille was pulled back, and a voice inquired their business, the owner of it trying to discern through the bars who the strangers were. They stepped back beyond the rays of the lantern that the monk was holding up to the grille. Tucker, in an exhausted voice he did not have to feign, said that they were weary travellers demanding food and shelter from His Beatitude the Abbot.

"But who are you?" the porter repeated.

In his anxiety to get a glimpse of the strangers he rashly drew the bolts and opened the door an inch or two. W.H. at once threw himself against it and sent the monk flying backwards head over heels into the flower beds beyond the flagged pergola which led from the outer wall to the door of the monastery itself. Followed by Tucker and the rest, he ran right into

the monastery refectory where, seated at the table with the Abbot and the guest-brother, were the four Teniote police officers who were walking into a large pie, and who at this invasion rose to their feet in alarm. They were covered by pistols, and W.H. demanded sternly of the Chief Officer what he had done with the public money of Tenos. When he denied all knowledge of it, W.H. suddenly said:

"You've grown very fat since you started eating that pie," with which remark he whipped out a knife and slashed it through what appeared to be the Chief Officer's paunch. Immediately hundreds of gold and silver coins gushed out to run jingling and tinkling along the flags of the refectory.

Back went the four police officers to Tenos under arrest, and two days later we set to work to count the money in the office. It was a task like that which the mother of Jim Hawkins set herself in *Treasure Island* when she tried to take from Billy Bones's sea-chest what was owing to her. The variety of the coins was fantastic. The history of the Ægean for the last two hundred years could be read in their images and superscriptions. There were even golden louis d'or and Venetian ducats of the early eighteenth century. I bought one of the louis d'or with the equivalent in paper money as a souvenir of this adventure; but it was stolen from me later on. We sent all the money up to Mr. Venizelos in Salonica. The total reached well over a thousand pounds sterling.

W.H. took over one or two more islands before, to our deep regret, he left us on the last day of December to return home. His journey was an unpleasant Odyssey. I still have the brief report he sent me from Malta on January 10th, 1917:

"After arriving at Piræus in the *Spetzai* and receiving orders from the S.N.O. to proceed to Mudros for a passage to England, I proceeded there to find the Malta mail was to miss fire that

week, consequently I sailed for Salonica, arriving in time to catch a troopship bound for Marseilles. Off Suda we heard that the *Ivernia* had been sunk, so we were ordered to supply survivors with blankets, etc. We left that evening, and about 11 p.m. 'Fritz' gave us a nasty jar. A very high sea was running, and as the huge ship was taking a list and going down by the head we were ordered to take to the boats. That night scene is impossible to describe, neither the subsequent one when we were adrift in a gale of wind a hundred miles from the nearest shore. The lifeboat was slowly filling, and I doubt whether any of the forty men in our boat thought they had a dog's chance. I did not. However, toward the morning hours a ray of light (and hope) shot up into the skies and soon a destroyer appeared and eventually rescued us under great difficulties. We were taken back to Suda, and a day or two later found a trawler bound for Malta, and now we are searching for means to proceed. It took us five days from Suda here and on the way towed a torpedoed ship for a while until our wire parted: further on we picked up thirty-seven men adrift from another ship— Hell — — — ”

W.H. strained his heart pulling at an oar that dreadful January night, and, as I remember, worked for the rest of the War in Switzerland.

My letters to Sir Francis Elliot during December afford a consecutive narrative of the occupation of the various islands in the Cyclades, and I print extracts from them to supplement what has already been narrated.

To my letter of December 13th reporting our arrival at and occupation of Syra, Sir Francis, writing from H.M.'s transport *Abbasieh*, on board which the British Legation was now installed at Keratsini, replied on December 17th:

*Congratulations on the success of your enterprise. The Greek Government don't appear to know of any occupation yet except Syra, but they anticipate the loss of the rest of the islands.*

*H.M. Govt. are now taking the lead with regard to the further demands. The French and Russians will no doubt follow ; if the Italians refuse I expect we shall act without them. One of the demands is for the re-establishment of the controls, in a form to be agreed upon with the Greek Govt., so as to render them as little vexatious as possible.*

*Meanwhile we are keeping such controls going as we can : the Monopoly still ask for permits for removal of petroleum : the Port Control is in full swing, though the number of ships entering and leaving is diminished by the blockade. Rogers therefore can't spare Maclure and McLoughlin : it being more than even necessary that the Control officers should wear uniform we cannot replace them by civilians, but Sells and Waugh will see what they can do for you.*

*I telegraphed to Wratistlaw, on receipt of your letter of the 12th, that you had gone to Syra with my sanction to establish the controls, and that you are working with the S.N.O. As regards the Consuls, if I leave Athens it will be necessary for them to correspond with Salonica as the seat of Govt., and I have asked F.O. to give the necessary instructions when the time comes.*

*I have just told Sells to get the rifles off to you by the ship which takes this : we have them on board here. They are said to be not at all useless.*

*It is extraordinary what a number of compromising things one finds when one is clearing up in the expectation of a domiciliary visit after one's departure. In a Chancery press was a clip of Dum-dum cartridges which was brought to me two or three years ago as incriminating evidence against someone or other—Italians, I think.*

On December 19th I wrote:

Syra.

*In supplement to my report No. 1679 of Dec. 12th I now have the honour to report the present state of affairs in the Cyclades.*

*I have divided the islands into three sub-controls dependent on the Island of Syra.*

(1) *Tenos Sub-Control. Officer in Charge Capt. Braggiotti. This consists of the islands of Tenos, Andros, Mykonos, and Delos.*

*There was some doubt whether Tenos would adhere peaceably to the Provisional Government or not and it was thought desirable here not to send Provisional Government troops until we had tested public feeling with regard to the arrival of Captain Braggiotti and his men. I am glad to say that since his arrival, Tenos has sent a deputation to the Nomarch of the Cyclades, M. Vassilakakis, to say that the island would adhere to the movement. I am inclined to think that this decision was probably influenced by the fact that the island had food for three days only, for it cannot be maintained that more than half the population is favourable to Mr. Venizelos. Almost without exception the Catholic population is hostile not merely to Mr. Venizelos but directly and positively to Great Britain. To-morrow, December 20th, a certain number of police will be sent from Syra to supplant the hostile police now on the Island.*

*I have instructed Captain Braggiotti to send Lieutenant Hiscock, with a certain number of men, to assume control at Andros, but I have not yet received any report on the subject. The question of sending National Defence Police to Andros at the same time as to Tenos is being discussed.*

*One of our problems with regard to Tenos is the wreck of the Braemar Castle. It has been decided to bring the ship to Syra as soon as possible, but a southerly gale having sprung up, it has been impossible to move her. This may also cause a postponement of the police expedition of to-morrow.*

*On Sunday, Dec. 17th, I sent two agents to assume control at Mykonos. They were accompanied by five Venizelist police. The Island adhered enthusiastically to the movement.*

*All our investigations\* up to date confirm the importance of the hostile submarine intelligence directed by the late German Consulate here. We are on the track of a boat carrying vegetables between here and Tenos which seems actually to have been alluded to in the code letters which were intercepted between the German Consulate and the German Legation, Athens. One may hazard the theory that the main submarine organization of the enemy was transferred to the Cyclades from Crete when the latter was occupied by British Naval forces.*

(2) *Naxos Sub-Control. Officer in charge, Mr. Picktor. This consists of the islands of Naxos, Paros, Antiparos, Amorgos, Anaphi, Santorin, and Eos.*

*Immediately prior to the occupation of Naxos the Islands of Eos and Paros adhered enthusiastically to the movement, and very few police were moved there. Port and Postal Control has been instituted under Mr. Picktor's direction.*

*To the Island of Santorin I have sent Mr. Blair with two agents in the S.S. Thessalia, carrying corn to the starving island. They were enthusiastically welcomed and the hostile Custom House official was immediately given up; he was brought back to this island. To-morrow the trawler will leave with police and men for Mr. Picktor, also stationery, and flour for Amorgos and Sikinos if they adhere, with agents for Port Control there. Mr. Blair will leave Santorin to act under Mr. Picktor in Naxos. An agent will also be sent to-morrow to the Island of Anaphi. This will round off the Naxos Sub-Control.*

(3) *Zea Sub-Control. This consists of the islands of Zea, Thermia, Seriphos, Siphnos, and, if not opposed by the French, the Island of Milos.*

*This sub-control has not yet been dealt with at all. I propose to put Lieut. Maclure in charge, with headquarters at Zea where*

\* They were still further confirmed some months later when the papers of a German U-boat sunk in Taranto Harbour were recovered.



*we have reasons to believe there is a submarine organization. There might be some slight opposition here, but nothing serious. The Island of Thermia we understand is favourable to the Provisional Government. The Island of Siphnos has already proclaimed adhesion, and two agents will be left there to-morrow with flour in the trawler which will carry the police to Amorgos and Sikinos.*

*The reason why the full control of this group has been postponed is that on the Island of Seriphos there are some fifty Royalist troops sent there some time ago in connexion with the strike disturbances in the mines. We shall have to wait until Naxos is perfectly secure in order to withdraw troops from there to effect the occupation of Seriphos. The majority of the population is more enthusiastically Venizelist than in almost any of the Cyclades, and it is only the presence of Royalist troops that prevented our going there at once.*

*With regard to the Island of Milos which has already proclaimed its adhesion to the Venizelist cause, I do not know how far the French occupation there will interfere with our Port Control, but in any case I shall place a couple of agents on the Eastern Coast.*

On December 21st I wrote:

*Mr. Vassilakakis, the new Prefect of the Cyclades, is administering very wisely and very well. Colonel Calomenopoulos, who is in command of the troops, is also acting in complete accord with us. The arrival of the wheat is of inestimable service, and if rice, cotton, and raw hides can be supplied, I have no hesitation in saying that within a month the whole of the Cyclades will have forgotten that a minority was hostile to Mr. Venizelos.*

*It seems desirable that we should extend presently and occupy the Sporades. This will be a matter for the Vice-Admiral to decide, but the Island of Skiathos in particular seems to me of great importance in the event of our going to war with the Government at Athens. The problem of Euboea is also most pressing. I do most earnestly beg that proper steps will be taken in time to*

*secure the magnesite mines which will be a continuous danger if Royalist troops are allowed to enter the Island in any numbers. They will be extremely difficult to clear out from that woody and mountainous district, and if stern measures are taken at once to prevent the passage of troops over the Chalkis Bridge there is no question but that with a little encouragement the Island will declare its adherence to Mr. Venizelos.*

*Three subaltern military censor officers have arrived from Egypt. One of them speaks French. The S.N.O. had recommended that so far as the Telegraph is concerned, they work under Mr. Dawkins who is now in charge, and as far as the Post is concerned, under Lt. Tucker. Later on it will be perhaps useful to send one of them to Tenos or Zea and another to Naxos. I have telegraphed to Alexandria advocating that Chios and Samos be included in our Port Control. Lt. Ben Hodder at Samos could act at once as Port Officer and Alexandria suggests that Vice-Consul Chafy should act as Port Officer at Chios. It seems to me inadvisable to make Consular officials Port Officers under Military Control, and I have proposed Capt. Thomson for Mytilene.*

*In the Samos Port Control will of course be included the Island of Ikaria, and in view of Euboea's being occupied, Chalkis, Limni, and Kymi will have to be controlled.*

On December 27th I wrote:

*In supplement to my Report No. 1693 of the 19th and 21st December, I have the honour to say that the Island of Andros has adhered enthusiastically to the Provisional Government and that the Controls have been fully established there.*

*2nd-Lieut. Macartney, one of the Censor officers from Egypt, was dispatched to assume control of the Island of Zea, and report on the cable between here and the mainland. He was accompanied by representatives of the Provisional Government, and the Island has proclaimed its adhesion. The usual arrests were made.*

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*The Island of Thermia has also proclaimed its adhesion, but I have not been able to institute the Controls there owing to lack of officers.*

*The S.S. Astrapi, escorted by a trawler, which was to have sailed on December 20th on a round of the South-Eastern Cyclades, got herself caught in the anti-submarine nets before starting and has not been able to leave until to-day. She will proceed first to the Island of Siphnos, which has proclaimed its adhesion. Controls will be instituted there. She will then proceed to the Island of Kimolos, which has proclaimed its adhesion, and Controls will be instituted there. She will then proceed to Milos, which has proclaimed its adhesion, but we shall not leave a representative of the Military Control there in order not to seem to be competing with the French. She will then proceed to the Island of Sikinos, and the Controls will be instituted there. She will then proceed to the Island of Polykandros, where the Controls will be instituted. She will then proceed to the Island of Eos, which has already been controlled. Then to Santorin to pick up Mr. Blair who is now in charge there, leaving Sub-Lieut. Burns in charge. She will then proceed to the Island of Anaphi, which will be controlled. From Anaphi to Amorgos, where Mr. Blair will institute the Controls. From Amorgos to Naxos to pick up Mr. Picktor, temporarily in control there, and replace him with Lieut. Gout. She will then call at the Island of Paros to receive the reports on the Control there, when she will return to Syra.*

*On her return an expedition will be instituted to take over the Island of Seriphos, the last of the group which remains.*

*I have the honour to say that the only Island which is causing us any trouble is Naxos, owing to the fact of its size and consequently the existence of a mountainous hinterland. The worst village is Apeiranthos, which is the home of the emery workers, and is a natural fortress. There are at least 200 rifles in the place and a quantity of dynamite. Any attempt to take it by assault on the*

*part of the Venizelist troops would certainly fail and cause an unfortunate impression. At present it is being blockaded. Unfortunately the example of Apeiranthos has encouraged other mountain villages to become refractory, and it is questionable whether it would not be better to proclaim a strict blockade of the Island of Naxos, withdraw our Controls, and take with us a certain number of hostages. I have hopes, however, that Lieut. Gout's arrival will make a difference.*

*My great difficulty has always been throughout to eke out among the various Islands such efficient officers as I possess. In general, however, the development of the Control Services has been highly satisfactory and is much welcomed by the inhabitants. There has always been the greatest enthusiasm at the notion of a British occupation in any shape or form. I might say that even the refractory population of Apeiranthos was perfectly prepared to accept British dominion, but demurred at the Provisional Government.*

I do not propose to write an account in this volume of the diplomatic negotiations proceeding throughout December between King Constantine's Government and the Entente. The publication in the Greek White Book of telegrams from the King and Queen of Greece to the German Emperor dispatched during these weeks prove conclusively that if the Germans could have finished off Roumania in time to concentrate on Macedonia Old Greece would have gone to war against the Allies. For that possibility I had to make preparations in the way of arranging the necessary intelligence. The history of that I shall tell in the final volume.

The news that Lord Granville was being sent out as Diplomatic Representative of Great Britain to the Provisional Government in Salonica made it clear that in the event of war Sir Francis Elliot would leave Greece, and I knew that it was vital to find a godfather at once for our organization if it was

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to continue. The Vice-Admiral commanding the Eastern Mediterranean Squadron\* seemed in every way the most suitable sponsor, and I asked Sir Francis to suggest his visiting Syra and hearing from me the details of what we were doing and what we wished to do.

To this Sir Francis wrote on December 21st:

*I am asking the Admiral to do the best he can for you subject to paramount naval considerations. I am also suggesting that he should send for you and have a conversation in which you could tell more of the scope and purpose of your organization than I could do by filling reams of paper. If you do see him don't forget that he is very much a Vice-Admiral and that you are not even a pukka Captain R.M.L.I. !*

On December 27th the following telegram reached Syra:

SECRET

TELEGRAM from PIRÆUS, URGENT,

timed 6.40 p.m. 27/12/16

No. 75. Vice-Admiral will arrive at Syra to-morrow morning. You should have ready for him complete list of military and port control officers in Cyclades as at present constituted and their detailed orders, together with general scheme of control of islands.

In an interview to-day I put in detail the following suggestions as regards Controls in Cyclades.

- (1) That a Port Control Officer should be supplied by him for Syra and work under his orders in close touch with you and that any other port control officers should be under Syra Port Control as far as port duties are concerned, remaining under you for military control duties.
- (2) That post and telegraph control should be carried out by Military Control officers where practicable, a special officer being in charge stationed at Syra.

\* Admiral Sir Cecil Thursby, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., R.N.

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- (3) *That contraband control should be run from Salonica under Consul General there and that Port Control Officer should supervise cargo traffic under Syra Port Control Officer.*
- (4) *That rationing of islands should be run from Salonica under Consul General there in conjunction with the Provisional Government there.*
- (5) *That Major Temple\* should keep in close touch direct with you over matters of Intelligence and counter-espionage.*

*Suggestions three and four would only come into operation in event Legation leaves.*

*Vice-Admiral will provide two motor-launches for Syra but they will probably have to replace trawlers withdrawn. The only alternative appears to be to allow Syra and the other islands to return to the French Control area. This must of course be avoided.*

*I have assured the Vice-Admiral that all action in islands and institution of various controls have been carried out in conjunction with and with the assistance of S.N.O. Syra.*

*Elliot*

Admiral Thursby reached Syra on December 28th, by which time I was completely laid out with a ferocious attack of neuritis. However, Tsitsopoulos managed to get me into a state of comparative freedom from pain, and the Admiral was good enough to come up to the Turkish Consulate and interview me in bed. Nobody could have been kinder. He remained two hours, and before he left he pledged himself to help in every way possible.

About the middle of December Poseidon, whose ambition to become a great orator had been aroused that afternoon in July when he had read from the balcony of the Annexe a communiqué from the Western Front, asked me if I would have any objection to his delivering a speech in the Square at Syra for the celebration of the name-day of Eleutherios Venizelos on December 28th.

\* The Naval Staff Officer (Intelligence) at Mudros.

"But are you capable of doing that?" I asked.

"Excuse to me, my captain," said Poseidon, bowing with his hand on his heart, "but Mr. Philandros\* will write the speech for me. It will be to learn."

For the next fortnight, whenever he had a moment of leisure, Poseidon might be seen practising gestures in front of a looking-glass, or like Demosthenes trying his voice against the waves of the sea upon the harbour mole. The services of everybody in turn were engaged to listen to his declamation of the glowing words written by Philandros. He even fell into the habit of walking about with one arm tucked into the top of his waistcoat like a tragedian.

To my immense regret, and to his, I was too ill to hear the oration, the text of which I subjoin in his own translation, which, though it grossly maligns the eloquent Greek of Philandros, has a quality of its own which I think is worth preserving.

*Speech delivered by Mr. J. Poseidon of Smyrna, to the people of Syra, on the Central Square, on the occasion of the name-day celebration of the NATION'S CHIEF, E. VENIZELOS.*

"The revolted protest from one corner to the other of sane Hellenism, and the splendid patriotic speech of the Metropolitan of LESBOS, have like a thunder spread and discovered unhesitatingly and without sideways the authors of our National catastrophe.

The pure Hellenic soul was pressed savagely since two years and more, and the national conscience was inhumanly stepped on, in order to avoid the rousing even of a breath of protest against those who were forging the links of the union of our race.

To-day, however, everything has been unveiled. The Hellenic soul has awakened and the national voice has thundered to the corners of the Universe that the great Catastrophe of Hellenism is he to whom the Hellenic soul has elevated till lately

\* *Athenian Memories*, p. 269.

to the altar of adoration. It is he with whose name until lately the Hellenic hope was soothed. It is he with the high title of whom the Hellenic conviction was lulled to sleep.

It is he whom the title of King of the Hellenes and the august name of the last defender of Hellenism was unworthily given. It is he the one who submits himself to the ethnoctone winks of a barbarian Teuton, forcing the profaned Hellenic Crown to bend grumbling and squeaking from indignation.

Yes, he is the Hellenoctone Von Dino, with Schenck, Esslin, Gounari, Streit, Dousmani and Co. He is according himself the immortal head of the Lernian Hydra: the others are forming its remaining serpent heads. But the vile ones were forgetting that on the other side of Hellenism a new giant Hercules was standing who with his club would crush them one by one.

They have forgotten these perverse ones the history of our ancient and glorious nation, into whose family they proudly glide.

Dinos has forgotten Codros who voluntarily preferred death for his country's sake. He has forgotten the Bulgaroctone Emperors of Byzance, from one of whose silver-bound skull used to get drunk Kroume, the ancestor of his allies the Bulgarians. He has forgotten the expiatory sacrifice which was offered to the enslaved nation, by Constantine Palæologos. He has forgotten the Naval battle of Navarino which gave Greece her freedom, and he has forgotten all these things because he never embraced them, because he was never affected, because he never felt any enthusiasm for them, because it is not *his* history.

Foreigner himself with regard to the hereditary manners and customs of our race, a foreigner to the many-centuried history of ours and a foreigner at last towards our national ideals, he boastfully considers himself a pupil and child of Menidhi.

What could subsequently hope our unfortunate Nation from such a creature, who if he has any desires they would be how it would be possible to cut out the heads of all the pure Hellenes and change them into skulls.

'I shall not leave Greece, until I have turned it all to ashes,' he was roaring one night, pacing like a loafer the room of the Palace which the Nation has built to its future Kings.



May your remembrance be eternal, unforgotten Tricoupi, who with all your contribution to the Royal marriage, convenient for some but ruinous to the Nation, you did not hesitate to declare that on the day on which the unworthy namesake of the Constantines will mount the steps of the Hellenic throne he will besmear with blood destructively the Hellade! Who? The King of the Hellenes! The adored of the Nation! The dreamt-of Saviour and Liberator!!

But oh! monster of monsters! Greece is not your feudal tenure. Oh, ignoble monster, the throne is not your inheritance! Oh, bloodthirsty monster, the Nation is not your generation. And—if you have abjured our unredeemed brothers, if you are indifferent to the martyrdom you impose on your slaves through your Germans, if you have desired to cause a bloodshed in Athens, a monstrous action, before which turn pale the night of St. Bartholomew, the martyrdoms of the Inquisition, and the Turko-Bulgarian abominations, learn, that the Nation does not bear with you any longer and does not allow you to continue your orgies in its name.

Here, do you see it? It is rising in a body, asking for revenge upon you, its infernal destroyer! It is standing like a giant, demanding on a dish your head.

Nero, Caligula, Kroumi, Tamerlan, Mohamed, you will not escape by allying yourself with the bloodthirsty Kaiser, with the little Tsar of the Bulgarians, and with the little Napoleon of the Turks. You could enslave us all and make us your slaves as well as the slaves of those who have always been the eternal enemies of our race, and warriors against us!

In your beastly fury, you have thought that you could separate us for ever from the powerful protecting Powers of our Nation, which if they still bear with you do so for our Nation's sake! They are doing it for us, who are not your accomplices, we are not the collaborators in your abominable actions.

They are nodding to us signs of compassion and they are spreading over us a cover of protection and support, just at the moment we all arise in a body in favour of our crushed liberties: for you . . . oh! for you the National echo is spreading all over

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the Panhellenism: Malediction and anathema on you and your generation! Malediction and anathema on your base and shameful tools! Malediction and anathema on all those who still surround you and praise you! Gibbet, gibbet to all of you!

Church and State, Race and Nation have disinherited you, at last they have pulled you down entirely, and they have declared you decadent of the Hellenic Throne, which your foot is staining!

Here, do you hear the voice of the Nation? It is roaring cursingly: 'Down with the Traitor! Down with the Tyrant! Down with the Fool! Down with the Drunkard! Down with the Bulgarian! Down with the Turk!' While on the other side it is tuning praises and hymns, exclaiming stentorously: 'Long live the Saviour of the Nation, Venizelos! Long live his eminent fellow-workers! Long live the protecting Powers! Long live the Hellenic Nation! Long live the National Army!'"

(Enthusiastic hurrahs and continual applauses from the crowd.)

Although I could not hear the oration I could hear from bed the distant cheers of the crowd, and I can still see the grin on Tucker's face as he came up afterwards to tell me that at the conclusion of Poseidon's impassioned delivery of his speech the listeners with one accord had cried: "Hail, thou golden-mouthed one!"

However, lest the combined oratory of Philandros and Poseidon should seem to present too favourable an estimate of Mr. Venizelos, it may be as well to record that, while the King was being denounced in Syra, in Athens several Metropolitans of the Orthodox Church were pronouncing malediction and anathema upon Venizelos in a public place where the populace was raising a great cairn of stones, every stone of which was laid on with a separate curse upon the mighty Cretan whom they called the Senegalese he-goat and whose representation with a forked tail and horns was being sold in the Athenian shops as a picture-postcard.

## APPENDIX

### PROPOSALS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF ADVISORY CONTROL IN THE PELOPONNESUS AND SUCH ISLANDS AS HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON

#### A. PORT CONTROL:

The Ports of GREECE to be directed by the Military Control Office, ATHENS, under three Military Control Officers, British, French, and Italian.

- (1) The PORT OF PIRÆUS to be administered by three Port Officers, British, French, and Italian.
- (2) The PORT OF PATRAS to be administered by three Port Officers, British, French, and Italian.
- (3) The PORT OF VOLO to be administered by two Port Officers, British and French.
- (4) The PORT OF CALAMATA to be administered by a British Port Officer.
- (5) The PORT OF SYRA to be administered by a British Port Officer.
- (6) The PORT OF CORFU to be administered by French and Italian Port Officers.
- (7) The PORT OF CHALCIS to be administered by a French Port Officer.
- (8) The PORT OF PREVEZA to be administered by an Italian Port Officer.
- (9) The PORT OF SAMOS to be administered by a British Port Officer.

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### B. POLICE CONTROL:

- (1) CORINTH for ARGOLIS: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.
- (2) TRIPOLI for ARCADIA: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.
- (3) PATRAS for ACHÆA: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.
- (4) PYRGOS for MESSINA and ZANTE: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.
- (5) KALAMATA for LACONIA: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.
- (6) SYRA for CYCLADES: To be administered by a British Police Control Officer.

### C. POSTAL AND TELEGRAPHIC CONTROL:

#### CENSORSHIP: POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

One Officer at SYRA.

”	”	”	ZANTE.
”	”	”	CORINTH.
”	”	”	TRIPOLI.
”	”	”	ARGOS.

#### PATRAS:

The Railway Officer to be subordinate to the Port Officer and to assist the Port Officer wherever possible. The two between them to establish agencies at MISSOLONGHI.

#### KALAMATA:

The Port Officer at KALAMATA will also control the railway and establish agencies at CYPARISSIA, NAVARINO, GYTHION, MONEMVASSIA, and CERIGO. The last-named is an important place and there should be an agent there to establish the liaison with the Senior Naval Officer at SUDA BAY.

It is understood that the French have established a

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wireless at CERIGO, and it is hoped that the British Agent will have the opportunity of using it, if necessary.

There is a proposal to establish a British Vice-Consulate at KALAMATA.

ARGOS:

The Railway Officers at ARGOS (it might be possible, if more convenient, to establish him at NAUPLIA where he would act as Port Officer also) should establish agencies on the Islands of ÆGINA, POROS, HYDRA, and SPETZIA.

SYRA:

The Port Officer should establish agents on the Islands of ANDROS, TENOS, ZEA, SERIPHOS, SIPHNOS, SIKINOS, SANTORIN, EOS, AMORGOS, NAXOS, PAROS, and MYKONOS.

VOLO:

The Port Officers here will be responsible for agents at LARISSA, LAMIA, TRIKALA, CALABAKA, and on the Islands of SKIATHOS, SKIPHOS, and SKOPELOS.

N.B. It might be politic to give up the Port Control of VOLO entirely to the French. In any case, the British Vice-Consul who is being sent to LARISSA can look after the interests of the Contraband Department.

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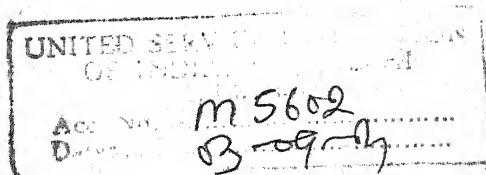
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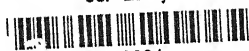
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